

# **FREEDOM SCHOOL CURRICULUM**



## **MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM SUMMER, 1964**

Edited and Introduced by

**Kathy Emery, Sylvia Braselmann, and Linda Gold**

## SOURCES

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Most the documents used are from SNCC Papers.  
The original SNCC papers are at the King Library and Archives,  
The Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, Atlanta, GA.  
We have used the Microfilm Edition: SNCC, The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee Papers, 1959-1972 (Sanford, NC: Microfilming Corporation of America, 1982)  
We are citing the reel, file and first inclusive page number in the table below.

Some documents are from the Iris Greenberg Collection:  
Iris Greenberg / Freedom Summer Collection, 1963-1964  
Manuscripts, Archives, and Rare Books Division,  
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,  
The New York Public Library;  
Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations

Some case studies are papers written for SDS (Students for a Democratic Society)  
The original SDS records are at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.  
We have use the Microfilm Edition: Papers, 1958-1970 / Students for a Democratic Society (U.S.) (Glen Rock, N.J.: Microfilming Corp. of America, 1978.)  
We are citing the reel and file in the table below.

The article "The Freedom Schools; Concept and Organization" by Staughton Lynd was published in *Freedomways*, Second Quarter 1965, p302-309; and is reprinted with permission of the author.

The open letter to the President, "Triple Revolution" was published in *Liberation*, April 1964, p 9-15.

Two scenes from *In White America* by Martin Duberman; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1964. (First Scene: The Klan, p43-52; Second Scene: Little Rock, p 64-69.)  
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The article "Rifle Squads or the Beloved Community" by A. J. Muste was published in *Liberation*, May 1964, p 7-12.

The case study "Behind the Cotton Curtain" is from the Ellin papers in the Digital Archives of the McCain Library and Archives, University of Southern Mississippi  
(<http://anna.lib.usm.edu/uhtbin/cgisirsi/zUw9Mc1vK7/163340015/503/612>)

Prospectus for the Mississippi Freedom Summer	SNCC; 39, 190, 1039
COFO Flyer: Freedom Summer	Iris Greenberg Collection
COFO Flyer: MFDP	Iris Greenberg Collection
COFO Flyer: Freedom Registration	Iris Greenberg Collection
Prospectus for a Summer Freedom School Program	SNCC; 39, 165, 75
Curriculum Conference Subgroup Report	SNCC; 67, 340, 1000
Outline for Case Studies	SNCC; 67, 340, 999
Memo to Freedom School Teachers	SNCC; 67, 340, 1183
Overview of the Freedom Schools	SNCC; 67, 340, 864
Notes on Teaching in Mississippi	SNCC; 67, 340, 1178
Non-Material Teaching Suggestions (excerpt)	Iris Greenberg Collection
Profiles of Typical Freedom Schools	SNCC; 68, 364, 552
Mississippi Freedom Schools: New Houses of Liberty	SNCC; 68, 342, 93
Freedom School Data	SNCC; 67, 321, 2007
A Report, mainly on Ruleville	SNCC; 68, 367, 582
Mississippi Freedom Schools, 1964	SNCC; 68,346,224
Student Work: What the Summer Project has meant	Iris Greenberg Collection
Student Work: Palmers' Crossing Freedom News	SNCC; 39, 166, 0129
Student Work: Freedom Carrier	SNCC; 39, 166, 0127
Student Work: Freedom Star	SNCC; 67, 345, 1287
Platform of the Freedom School Convention	SNCC; 68, 346, 255
TOC and A Note to the Teacher	Iris Greenberg Collection
Academic Curriculum: Reading and Writing Skills	SNCC; 67, 340, 1002
Mathematics (Excerpt)	SNCC; 39, 165, 122
Science	SNCC; 67, 340, 761
Citizenship Curriculum Unit I - VI	SNCC; 67, 340, 830
Citizenship Curriculum Unit VII, part 1	SNCC; 67, 340, 902
Citizenship Curriculum Unit VII, part 2	SNCC; 67, 328, 346
Statistics on Education, Housing, Income, etc.	Iris Greenberg Collection
The South as an Underdeveloped Country	SDS; 36, 4B:46
The Poor in America	SNCC; 67, 340, 815
Chester, PA. —Community Organization in the Other America	SDS; 39, 4B:392
Guide to Negro History	SNCC; 67, 340
History addendum I	SNCC; 67, 337, 641
History addendum II	SNCC; 39, 166; 140
Negro History Study Questions	SNCC; 67, 340, 1081
Development of Negro Power since 1900	SNCC; 67, 340, 830
Mississippi Power Structure	SNCC; 67, 339, 746
Power of the Dixiecrats	SDS; 37, 4B:158
Nazi Germany	SNCC; 67, 340, 1052
Hazard, KY	SNCC; 68, 382, 824

Statements of Discipline of Nonviolent Movements	SNCC; 67, 340, 797
Readings in Nonviolence	Iris Greenberg Collection
Nonviolence in American History	SNCC; 67, 340, 365
Voter Registration Laws in Mississippi	SNCC; 67, 340, 783
Civil Rights Bill	SNCC; 67, 340, 788
Teaching Mat. Unit VII: Campaign Lit. on Mrs. Hamer	SNCC; 67, 340, 1187
Teaching Mat. Unit VII: Candidate biography	SNCC; 67, 336, 0906
Teaching Mat. Unit VII: Regular Voter Registration Form	SNCC; 39, 165, 0087
Teaching Mat. Unit VII: MFDP Voter Registration Form	SNCC; 67, 340, 1146
Teaching Mat. Unit VII: Sample Sections MS Constitution	SNCC; 67, 340,



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**PREFACE: EDITORS' COMMENTS**

This manuscript contains all the curriculum material that was written for and during Mississippi Freedom Summer, as assembled on the curriculum part of the website [www.educationanddemocracy.org](http://www.educationanddemocracy.org). It includes also an introduction to put the curriculum and the schools in historical context. Embedded in the introduction are links to supporting documents about Freedom Summer and the schools.

The design for the curriculum was laid out at the curriculum planning conference in March of 1964, and the curriculum was assembled during the next few month. Some parts were written specifically for the Mississippi Freedom Schools, others were adapted for that purpose, and articles or papers from other organizations were added. Some of the sections of the curriculum were distributed directly to the Freedom School teachers, others were provided only to the local Freedom School coordinators or mailed out later during the summer. Therefore, the Freedom School curriculum has never existed in the format you find here on our website, which is probably the first attempt at collating and assembling all those materials in one place.

We think that we have been able to find nearly all of the documents, but at times we can only assume that what we have inserted was what was used. We have taken to heart Casey Hayden's advice to us, "Things changed pretty fast, and the various drafts which you have, and the papers which seem to have materialized out of previous lists, are probably beyond anyone's memory, and possibly beyond reason, so if you just make your best guesses about what turned into what on the lists, I feel pretty sure you will be providing the best guesses available" (personal correspondence with authors, 4/8/04).

During Freedom Summer, pieces of the curriculum were added in response to the need in the schools, and some of the teachers wrote their own material. One can argue that the curriculum's central premise, the importance of questioning and connecting the material to the student's life, challenged the concept of a written curriculum. The Freedom School curriculum encouraged—in fact, mandated—that the teacher improvise. Staughton Lynd suggested to "include any chunks of material that you can lay your hands on as items that were written for the Freedom Schools, and may have been used by at least some teachers" (personal communication with authors, 3/3/04). We followed that advice with one exception—we did not include the fairly extensive collections in the SNCC papers of material used in an English project in some schools.

In general, we have tried to recreate the curriculum as it was described in the *Table of Contents* on the cover page of the mimeographs distributed to the teachers. At the places that seemed appropriate to us, we have inserted curriculum material that arrived later, or was written during the summer. The "Introductory Documents" were chosen to give the reader an overview of Freedom Summer as well as the plan and concept behind the curriculum and the schools. We have also included some reports and work of students.

Our source for all documents and the curriculum itself are the SNCC and MFDP papers (located at the King Center, Atlanta, and available on Microfilm in many University Libraries); the Iris Greenberg Papers at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York; and the SDS papers (located at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, and also available on Microfilm.) Every part of the curriculum is annotated exactly as to where it can be found in these collections. In retyping the documents, we have corrected obvious typing errors, but have otherwise left appearance and layout as close to the original as possible.

Although this collection of curriculum material is copyrighted by us we do not claim authorship of anything but the introduction. We encourage everyone to print any part of interest

and use it for teaching, research, or nonprofit use. We intend to provide a PDF version of the complete curriculum on this website ([www.educationanddemocracy.org](http://www.educationanddemocracy.org).)

### **Recommended resources:**

We are publishing the Freedom School Curriculum because we think that it is a timeless example of a progressive curriculum successfully implemented. While a superb model, the curriculum was, nevertheless, a very specific response to a unique historical period out of which its aims were generated. We provide only the briefest outline of this context in our [introduction](#). We *strongly* recommend that you read more about Freedom Summer.

We are in the process of publishing two books about the Freedom Summer and the Freedom Schools (see “Books and Articles” on the Education and Democracy website). *Lessons of Freedom Summer* puts the Freedom Schools and the curriculum in the wider context of the civil rights movement, the history of alternative education, and the current context of high-stakes testing. Its target audiences are teachers and teacher educators, but it is relevant for all those who are interested in the different aspects of, and methods employed by, the civil rights movement, especially community organizers. *People of Freedom Summer* is a text and workbook for high school and junior college students. The purpose of this book is to connect the history of the civil rights movement with the life of the student and today’s social justice and equal rights issues through questions and activities.

Some of the websites recommended below have extensive bibliographies. For a quick overview we recommend the following resources:

### **Books:**

1. Dittmer, John. *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994. Dittmer’s book is a comprehensive story of the Mississippi civil rights movement and excellent in putting Freedom Summer into this context.
2. Sutherland Martinez, Elizabeth, ed. *Letters from Mississippi*. Brookline: Zephyr Press, 2002. This is a collection of letters sent by Freedom Summer volunteers, grouped and annotated by Elizabeth Sutherland Martinez, and a foreword by Julian Bond. It is a very good first person account of the events of Freedom Summer, seen through the eyes of the northern volunteers.

**Articles** A few articles have been written about the Freedom Schools specifically:

1. Perlstein, Daniel. “Teaching Freedom: SNCC and the Creation of the Mississippi Freedom Schools.” *History of Education Quarterly* 30 (Fall 1990): 297-324.
2. Chilcoat, George W., and Ligon, Jerry A. “Developing Democratic Citizens: The Mississippi Freedom Schools as a Model for Social Studies Instruction,” *Theory and Research in Social Education* (XXII:2, Spring 1994, 128-175).
3. Chilcoat, George W., and Ligon, Jerry A. “‘Helping to Make Democracy a Living Reality’: The Curriculum Conference of the Mississippi Freedom Schools,” *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision* (XV:1, Fall 1999, 43-68).
4. Chilcoat, George W., and Ligon, Jerry A. “We Will Teach What Democracy Really Means By Living Democratically Within Our Own Schools,” *Education and Culture* (XI:3, Spring 1995, 1-19).
5. Chilcoat, George W., and Ligon, Jerry A. “Theatre as an Emancipatory Tool: Classroom Drama in the Mississippi Freedom Schools,” *Journal of Curriculum Studies* (XXX:5, 1998, 515-543).

6. Rachal, John R. "We'll Never Turn Back: Adult Education and the Struggle for Citizenship in Mississippi's Freedom Summer." *Adult Education Quarterly* 40, no. 3 (May 2000): 166.

#### Websites:

1. Civil Rights Movement Veterans: <http://www.crmvet.org/>

This a great resource for bibliography, links, stories of people working in the southern civil rights movement, a list of speakers, and current announcements

2. University of Southern Mississippi Digital Archives: <http://www.lib.usm.edu/~spcol/crda/>

Under "Oral Histories" you will find, among others, those of Mississippi local people (e.g. Hamer, Moore, Henry, Blackwell, etc.,) of members of the white "power structure" (e.g. Hamilton, Harned, McDaniel, etc.,) of SNCC and CORE workers in Mississippi (e.g. Cobb, Watkins, Guyot, etc.,) and of Freedom Summer volunteers (e.g. Adickes, Handke, Rubin, Barber, etc.)

Under "Search the Digital Collections" (click on Digital Media Archive, then Hyperion Hierarchy, then Civil Rights in Mississippi Digital Archive) you will find, for example, Photographs of Freedom Summer and the Schools in "Randall Photographs"; and diaries of Freedom School teachers in "Shaw papers" "Adickes papers" and "Glass Diary"

3. "McComb, USA": <http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/courses/ci407ss/>

A play written by students at the McComb Freedom School in 1964.

#### Music:

1. Voices of the Civil Rights Movement: Black American Freedom Songs 1960-1966.

Smithsonian Folkways CD SF 40084. Some of the volunteers have said what they remember most vividly of Freedom Summer is the singing. This two CD set (43 songs) contains recordings of mass meetings and of the many ensembles that were created during the Southern Civil Rights movement. The enclosed booklet, written by Bernice Johnson Reagon, provides an excellent introduction into the role of African American musical culture in the civil rights movement, and explains many of the songs.

2. Freedom is a Constant Struggle: Songs of the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement. Folk Era Records FE1419CD. During Freedom Summer, many folk singers participated in the Mississippi Caravan of Music and gave concerts in the Freedom Schools. This two CD set (40 songs) a project of the Cultural Center of Social Change ([www.ccsocialchange.org](http://www.ccsocialchange.org)) features those artists and their songs about the movement in Mississippi.

#### Photos:

Randall, Herbert. *Faces of Freedom Summer*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2001.

#### Acknowledgements:

Lois Chaffee, co-chair of the Curriculum Planning Committee, has to be credited with the creation of this curriculum.

Staughton Lynd (statewide Freedom School Coordinator during Freedom Summer) and Liz Aaronsohn, (previously Liz Fusco, statewide Freedom School Coordinator for the two years after Freedom Summer) gave us permission to reprint articles they have written on the Freedom Schools.

Herbert Randall gave us permission to use some of his photos of Freedom Summer on this website; Howard Zinn and Martin Duberman gave us permission to reprint excerpts of their work.

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We were amazed at the amount of support and encouragement we received from these movement veterans. To us, a younger generation, it provided a glimpse of what the Beloved Community must have been like.

We thank George Chilcoat and Jerry Ligon for comments and support.

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Finally, we thank Shelley Adams for typing most of the documents, and John Pilgrim for designing the Freedom School Curriculum website: [www.eduactionanddemocracy.org](http://www.eduactionanddemocracy.org).

**Call for comments and corrections:**

As mentioned above, we have not been able to locate all parts of the curriculum, and we hope that those who taught in the Freedom Schools in 1964 will be kind enough to make us aware of any mistakes we have made or can provide missing material. Where we could identify the authors of the individual parts of the curriculum, we have done so. We would appreciate any information as to the identity of the other authors. Also, we think we have not infringed on any copyright, but would appreciate notification if have accidentally done so.

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**INTRODUCTION: FREEDOM SUMMER AND THE FREEDOM SCHOOLS**

In the summer of 1964, forty-one Freedom Schools opened in the churches, on the back porches, and under the trees of Mississippi. The students were native Mississippians, averaging fifteen years of age, but often including small children who had not yet begun school to the elderly who had spent their lives laboring in the fields. Their teachers were volunteers, for the most part still students themselves. The task of this small group of students and teachers was daunting. They set out to replace the fear of nearly two hundred years of violent control with hope and organized action. Both students and teachers faced the possibility, and in some cases, the reality, of brutal retaliation from local whites. They had little money and few supplies. Yet the Freedom Schools set out to alter forever the state of Mississippi, the stronghold of the Southern way of life.

The schools were an integral part of the 1964 Mississippi Summer Project (later known as Freedom Summer). The Summer Project was designed by an umbrella organization called the Council of Federated Organizations. COFO was an organization coordinating the efforts of representatives from the four major civil rights groups. For example, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) provided lawyers for those thrown in jail when they participated in voter registration drives and civil disobedience. The Congress on Racial Equality (CORE) helped organized community centers. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) had established the Citizen Education Program in Mississippi the year before Freedom Summer. The Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC, pronounced “snick”) provided the field workers that went to the most dangerous parts of Mississippi to register voters. Freedom Summer was also supported the National Council of Churches, and during the summer volunteers of the Medical Committee for Human Rights, and lawyers from a variety of groups worked in Mississippi. The long-term aim of Freedom Summer was to transform the power structure of Mississippi. The short-term aim of the summer project was to challenge the legitimacy of the all white Mississippi Democratic Party at the Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City in August of 1964. To do this, organizers needed to create a parallel state party that was truly representative of the people of Mississippi—both blacks and whites.

To create a truly representative political party, the vast majority of disempowered African Americans would need to develop the self confidence and organizational skills required of active citizens. Freedom Summer’s three programs, distinct yet reinforcing each other, were voter registration, Freedom Schools and Community Centers (see [Prospectus for the Mississippi Freedom Summer](#).) The Freedom Schools’ major contribution to that process was to implement a curriculum based on the asking of questions whose answers were sought within the lives of the students. As the curriculum itself states:

We are going to talk about a lot of things: about Negro people and white people, about rich people and poor people, about the South and about the North, about you and what you think and feel and want. . . . And we’re going to try to be honest with each other and say what we believe. . . . We’ll also ask some questions and try to find some answers. The first thing is to look around, right here, and see how we live in Mississippi.

From Introduction to Unit I of the  
Citizenship Curriculum: *Comparison of  
Students’ Realities with Others*

Under the direction of Staughton Lynd, professor at Spelman College, the schools were established to teach confidence, voter literacy and political organization skills as well as academic

skills. The curriculum was directly linked to the formation of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. As Edwin King, who ran for Lieutenant Governor on the MFDP ticket, stated, “Our assumption was that the parents of the Freedom School children, when we met them at night, that the Freedom Democratic Party would be the PTA.”

Both the schools and the Summer Project set about to support black Mississippians in naming the reality of their lives and then in changing that reality. The classroom and voter registration became one; both began with the lives of the people of Mississippi and, for both, “questioning (was) the vital tool.” The questions raised struck at the most fundamental assumptions white Americans held about themselves and the institutions they had created. As SNCC’s James Forman stated:

**In SNCC we had often wondered:** How do you make more people in this country share our experiences, understand what it is to look in the face of death because you’re black, feel hatred for the federal government that always makes excuses for the brutality of Southern cops and state troopers?

**We often wondered:** How do you make a fat, rich country like the United States understand that it has starving people within its own boundaries, people without land, people working on Senator Eastland’s plantation for three dollars a day or less?

**We often wondered:** How can you make the people in the United States exercise their responsibility to rid themselves of racist politicians who fight every progressive measure introduced in the halls of Congress?

**We often wondered:** How can we find the strength to continue our work in the face of the poverty of the people, to do everything that shouts to be done in the absence of so many resources?

The Mississippi Summer Project was an attempt to answer those questions.

## THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN MISSISSIPPI

QUESTION: What is COFO?

ANSWER: COFO is the Council of Federated Organizations—a federation of all the national civil rights organizations active in Mississippi, local political and action groups and some fraternal and social organizations.

QUESTION: How did COFO get started?

ANSWER: COFO has evolved through three phases in its short history. The first phase of the organization was little more than an ad hoc committee called together after the Freedom Rides of 1961 in an effort to have a meeting with Governor Ross Barnett. This committee of Mississippi civil rights leaders proved a convenient vehicle for channeling the voter registration program of the Voter Education Project, a part of the Southern Regional Council, into Mississippi. With the funds of the Voter Education Project, COFO went into a second phase. In this period, beginning in February 1962, COFO became an umbrella for voter registration drives in the Mississippi Delta and other isolated cities in Mississippi. At this time COFO added a small full-



time staff, mostly SNCC and a few CORE workers, and developed a voter registration program. The staff worked with local NAACP leaders and SCLC citizenship teachers . . . as a committee with a staff and a program until the fall of 1963.

From Unit VII, Part 2 (I),  
Freedom School Curriculum

The civil rights organizations working with COFO agreed to share resources in Mississippi. They understood that they needed to cooperate to have a chance to bring change to the bastion of the white power structure. Mississippi had long been the most repressive state in the union. In 1962, African Americans were forty two percent of the population of the state. Of the approximately 525,000 registered voters in Mississippi who were eligible to vote in 1960, about 95 percent were white, fewer than five percent were African American. Economic and physical repression was a constant threat for most black Mississippians. Black infants (under one-year old) died at twice the rate of white children of the same age. Forty-three percent of Mississippi high school students left before graduating (1962). Ninety percent of Mississippi's sharecropper force was African American.

The seeds of Freedom Summer were planted in 1961. During that year a member of a Mississippi NAACP branch office, Amzie Moore, invited Bob Moses of SNCC to come to the state to help organize a voter registration campaign. Over the next several years, Moses and other SNCC field secretaries and CORE volunteers tried to help blacks register to vote. Medgar Evers of the NAACP helped organize a boycott of white businesses in Jackson beginning in December of 1962. But retribution was swift and brutal. The efforts were met with beatings, threats of violence and economic reprisals by the white establishment. The very night she returned from an unsuccessful attempt to register to vote, Fannie Lou Hamer and her family was put off the plantation where she had lived and worked for eighteen years. Among others, Herbert Lee, a farmer who helped voter registration efforts, was murdered in 1962 and Medgar Evers was murdered in 1963.

COFO's strength was not just the cooperation between the major civil rights group, but a strong local leadership. Black Mississippians identified with COFO as their own organization.

The emergence of the Ruleville Citizenship Group, and the Holmes County Voters League, testified to the possibility of starting strong local groups. It was felt that COFO could be the organization through which horizontal ties could develop among these groups. . . . During this second phase we began to feel more and more that the Committee could be based in a network of local adult groups sprung from the Movement as we worked the state.

From Unit VII, Part 2 (I),  
Freedom School Curriculum

In the summer of 1963, Al Lowenstein and Bob Moses came up with the idea of holding a mock election to show that blacks would indeed vote if allowed. This "Freedom Vote" officially began with a state-wide convention on October 6, 1963 at the Masonic Temple in Jackson. The delegates selected an integrated ticket of Aaron Henry (NAACP) for governor and Ed King (Tougaloo College chaplain) as his running mate. One hundred white students come down for several weeks in the fall to participate in "Freedom Registration." On election day in November, nearly 80,000 blacks voted.

The third phase representing the present functioning of the organization began in the fall of 1963 with the Freedom Vote for Governor. This marked the first state-wide effort and coincided with the establishment of a state-wide office in Jackson and a trunk line to reach into the Mississippi Delta and hill country. The staff has broadened to include more CORE and SNCC workers and more [SCLC] citizenship schools.

From Unit VII, Part 2 (I),  
Freedom School Curriculum

The success of the Freedom Vote was achieved at great cost. The process was slow and dangerous. To maintain the momentum gained in 1963, Moses and others began to contemplate a summer project for the following year but with a large number of northern white volunteers in order to draw national attention—and federal protection—to Mississippi. This idea of a Freedom Summer project was not immediately embraced by all those who had worked on the Freedom Vote. During SNCC and COFO staff meetings many expressed concern about the effect the influx of many white northerners would have on the development of local leadership. There was also concern about racial tensions. These debates led to an agreement to use white volunteers but to have their roles clearly defined and limited. Once this and other issues were settled, the decision was made to launch the Move On Mississippi. The blueprint for Freedom Summer was approved at the January COFO meeting (see Prospectus for the Mississippi Freedom Summer).

## **FREEDOM SUMMER**

QUESTION: What are the programs sponsored by COFO?

ANSWER: COFO works in two major areas. 1) Political, 2) Educational and social. The educational and social programs are the Freedom Schools, Federal Programs, Literacy, Work-study, Food and Clothing and Community Centers. Some of these are in operation; others are in the process of being developed.

Freedom Schools are planned for the summer of 1964. There are several things which hopefully will be accomplished by the Schools. 1) to provide remedial instruction in basic educational skills but more importantly 2) to implant habits of free thinking and ideas of how a free society works, and 3) to lay the groundwork for a statewide youth movement.

From Unit VII, Part 2(I),  
Freedom School Curriculum

During the deliberations about a summer project and discussions about what such a project could look like, SNCC field secretary Charles Cobb proposed to take advantage of the presence of the summer volunteers to use them as teachers, and include the issue of education in the project. “Students as well as professional educators from some of the best Universities and colleges in the North will be coming to Mississippi to lend themselves to the movement. These are some of the best minds in the country, and their academic value ought to be recognized and used to advantage.” Drawing from the ideas of the SCLC citizen’s schools and the SNCC education project in Selma Alabama, Cobb formally proposed the formation of Freedom Schools in December of 1963 (see Prospectus for a Summer Freedom School Program in Mississippi).

Cobb understood that, in Mississippi, “schools as institutions were part of the apparatus of oppression.”<sup>1</sup> Every aspect of traditional Mississippi schools conveyed the state’s message of racial inferiority and of the need for black children to adjust to their “place.” In the cotton lands

of the Delta, schools were closed during picking season. Libraries with books discarded from the white schools and science labs without equipment were the rule. In order to keep their jobs, African American public school teachers were often silent on political issues. In “Notes on Teaching in Mississippi,” Cobb stated:

Here, an idea of your own is a subversion that must be squelched. . . . Learning here means learning to stay in your place. Your place is to be satisfied—a “good nigger.” They have learned the learning necessary for immediate survival: that silence is safest, so volunteer nothing; that the teacher is the state, and tell them only what they want to hear; that the law and learning are white man’s law and learning.

The Freedom School concept proposed by Cobb added the school to the institutions that SNCC had set out to challenge, to transform, or, if necessary, to replace. In addition to opening the minds of the students to questioning, the schools would be an effective tool for political organizing; in the classroom, students would be trained to become local civil rights workers. “The overall theme of the school,” Cobb wrote, “would be the student as a force for social change in Mississippi.”<sup>2</sup>

What if we showed what was possible in education? We had already been approaching this through ‘literacy workshops’ within the context of organizing for voter registration. And SNCC itself had created a ‘nonviolent high school’ during the 1961 protests in McComb. . . . But we hadn’t really tackled education as an approach to community organizing in and of itself. Significantly, the model for how to do this emerged from a specific political organization that also grew out of grassroots organizing: the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.<sup>3</sup>

In Mississippi, SNCC workers found the doors to the existing institutions closed. In the Freedom Schools, as they had in the Freedom Vote and the Mississippi Democratic Party, they set about creating an alternative.

### **Origins of the Curriculum: The Curriculum Conference**

Once the decision for the summer project had been taken, a Summer Educational Program Committee was formed. The seven members of the committee, co-chaired by Lois Chaffee, a white English teacher from Tougaloo College and John O’Neal, SNCC field secretary and co-founder of the Free Southern Theatre, discussed curriculum strategy and set out to prepare a curriculum conference.

The National Council of Churches sponsored the curriculum conference on March 21-22, in New York. The organizers cast a wide net in their invitations to the conference, and the fifty three people that participated represented a wide range of educational, philosophical and civil rights expertise. The conference pulled together representatives of SNCC, CORE, SCLC, SDS (Students for a Democratic Society), the National Council of Churches, teachers unions and others. Among the participants were Ella Backer; Septima Clark, head of the SCLC citizen schools; Highlander’s Myles Horton; Noel Day, a junior-high school teacher who had organized a one-day program during the 1963 Boston school boycott; Norma Becker and Sandra Adickes, New York teachers and activist members of the United Federation of Teachers; and Staughton Lynd, political activist and professor of history at Spelman College, later state-wide director of the Freedom Schools.

The conference participants broke up into four subgroups to address the specific areas and to write curriculum (see Outline for Curriculum Planning). They were asked to keep in mind that the curriculum had to take into account the inexperience of the volunteers as teachers, their ignorance of what life was like in Mississippi, and the relative short time they would have for teaching. Thus, the curriculum had to be teacher friendly and immediately usable. The goal was a curriculum around questions and activities that would invite discussion and re-enforce the relationship between school and the life of the student.<sup>4</sup>

At the end of the two-day conference, the subgroups wrote reports that became the basis for the curriculum. Subgroup One, Leadership Training, broke up into two smaller committees. One committee developed a course in black history. Barbara Jones of SNCC's New York office wrote a Negro history outline, and Bea Young from Chicago submitted a study of the Amistad case. Staughton Lynd then used these two parts as the basis for the Guide to Negro History (see Guide to Negro History).<sup>5</sup> The other committee submitted a citizenship curriculum, written by Noel Day and Peggy Damon-Day. Noel Day had written curriculum for a number of Freedom Schools around the country. His proposal was somewhat abridged and modified by Jane Stembridge, and became the first six Units of the Citizenship Curriculum (see Citizenship Curriculum).<sup>6</sup>

Subgroup two, Remedial Academic Curriculum, again divided into two smaller working committees. One committee discussed the role of testing, and in its short report summarized the decision that testing should not be used, since "traditional evaluation and testing methods were as oppressive as traditional teaching methods—both caused fear, submissiveness and loss of self-respect among students."<sup>7</sup> The other committee report was submitted by Sandra Adickes, New York city teacher who had also taught in the summer schools in Prince Edwards county, Virginia, 1963. This report became the Reading and Writing part of the Academic Curriculum.

Subgroup four, Nonacademic Activities, recommended the use of student newspapers, drama, and creative writing, and leadership development through participation in voter registration activities. They also recommended that students should develop skills in student government and be given opportunities to meet in a state-wide convention to form networks.<sup>8</sup>

The majority of conference participants worked in subgroup three, Contemporary Issues. The group suggested to teach problem solving through a series of case studies that would relate classroom knowledge to the wider political, social and economic issues. In the first part of their report, they delineated the educational principles, and in the second part described a layout for 13 case studies to be written by conference participants and others (see Report of Contemporary Issues Subgroup of Curriculum Conference).

From the end of March to the beginning of the orientation on June 20, the curriculum committee, especially Lois Chaffee, worked furiously to collect all the promised material. Due to the short time, only some of the case studies suggested by the contemporary issues subgroup were completed. Some of those case studies included extensive lesson plans, for example the case study comparing the Nazi German power structure and the power structure of the South, which included teacher guidelines and suggestions for instructional strategies. Others merely provided information or analysis, but did not give suggestions on how to teach.

## **THE CURRICULUM**

The curriculum conference had brought together people from different groups and backgrounds. Similarly, the final curriculum distributed to the teachers consisted of material from different

origins. The Academic Curriculum and Unit VII of the Citizenship Curriculum were written for the Freedom Schools, as well as some case studies (Mississippi Power Structure; Voter Registration Laws in Mississippi; Civil Rights Bill; Nazi Germany.) Units I to VI of the Citizenship Curriculum was based on curriculum written previously, but modified for the Mississippi Freedom Schools. In addition, supporting information and teaching material was provided. COFO staff put together collections (Statistics on Education, Housing, Income and Employment and Health; Statements of Discipline of Nonviolent Movements; Readings in Nonviolence.) Two reprints of *Liberation* magazine articles were included (Triple Revolution; Rifle Squads or the Beloved Community.) Finally, the coordinators of the schools received a copy of Martin Duberman's *In White America*, and six papers written by members of SDS, the Students for a Democratic Society (South as an Underdeveloped Area; Chester, PA; Cambridge, MD; NYC School crisis; Power of the Dixiecrats; Hazard, KY).

The Table of Contents of the curriculum assigned these supporting materials to units of the citizenship curriculum. An alternative approach of connecting and using the case studies planned by the Contemporary Issues subgroup was provided in the Outline for Case Studies that had been mailed to the teachers. That these approaches were complementary rather than exclusive is shown in the fact that the suggested case studies on Freedom Rides and Sit-Ins, and on COFO's political program, became part VII of the Citizenship Curriculum.

Part of the curriculum material was mailed to the teachers on May 16, and the rest was typed up by Alice Lynd and reproduced on a hectograph machine by the Lynds in their Atlanta apartment. Staughton Lynd and some volunteers drove the material up to the orientation in Ohio in the trunk of the Lynd's car.

The curriculum writing, however, was not over. Very quickly The Guide to Negro History became a favorite of the students, and the COFO office in Jackson sent out more teaching materials, including copies of different books on Negro History, and Robert Zangrando wrote two more papers covering the time after 1900 (see History Addendum I, History Addendum II, and Negro History Study Questions).<sup>9</sup>

The volunteer teachers did what the organizers had hoped, they drew upon the students' interests and ideas, taught what they knew and developed curriculum and wrote papers. Non-violence in American History was one response to the need they saw in the schools. Hattiesburg Freedom School teacher and Stanford Historian Otis Pease added material on The Development of Negro Power in American Politics Since 1900; and Brian Peterson in McComb wrote a discussion course "The American Negro in a World of Change."<sup>10</sup>

The materials that have since become known as the Freedom School Curriculum were intended to be used in conjunction with the knowledge and skills that the students brought to the schools in the form of their own experiences. The interaction of written curriculum with lived experiences took the form of discussion, debate, drama and ultimately political action.<sup>11</sup> All three sections of the Freedom School Curriculum—the Academic Curriculum, the Citizenship Curriculum, and a Recreational Curriculum—were intended to promote the following principles:

1. The school is an agent of social change.
2. Students must know their own history.
3. The curriculum should be linked to the student's experience.
4. Questions should be open-ended.
5. Developing academic skills is crucial.

The Academic Curriculum suggested reading, writing and verbal activities based on the students' experiences. The Citizenship Curriculum consisted of seven units that would be used to "encourage the asking of questions, and hope that society can be improved." Each of the seven units consisted of subject material (both secondary and primary), questions, readings, and activities. The introduction to the curriculum wished to "emphasize" that such materials were

only suggestions, and that individual teachers may interpret the concepts in different ways or substitute other methods. There is probably more in each unit than it will be possible to use, but it was included so that each teacher would have a range of material to choose from, and extra material if necessary.

As they studied the curriculum, teachers were told to discard it and to create, on the spot if necessary, activities and questions that responded to the needs of the students in front of them. The curriculum's central premise, the importance of questioning, challenged the concept of a written curriculum. The Freedom School curriculum encourages—in fact, mandated—that the teacher improvise. The mimeographed sheets taken by the teachers into the classroom were not intended to be memorized or "covered"; the curriculum served as a springboard to classroom activities that linked the suggested lessons to the lived experience of the students. Like the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, the Freedom Schools were radical; their purpose was to replace an existing social institution with an institution rooted in the lived experience of those who had been exploited, oppressed, and excluded by the original system.

A necessary step in this process was to make the old system visible to the students, to help them understand how the system gained its power, and to help them challenge the system's version of reality, a version of reality which appeared externally in social structures and internally in their view of themselves, their history, and the possibilities for their future. Before the students could learn, they had to un-learn the self-negation taught by Mississippi's segregated schools. One strategy to achieve this was to replace the negative images of African Americans created by the old system with positive images generated by reclaimed history. The curriculum intended that teacher would help the students learn to trust their own voices and their own experience.

### **The Academic Curriculum**

The first part of the Academic curriculum consisted of "the presentation of conventional academic subjects." Teachers were advised to introduce these subjects "at the beginning of the school day, when students are fresh."<sup>12</sup> From the beginning, the Freedom Schools interpreted the teaching of skills as a political act. The failure of the Mississippi public schools to teach skills maintained racial boundaries and reinforced students' sense of their own inferiority. To challenge the power structure, the students needed to read, to write, and to master basic math; the Freedom Schools began the task of providing these skills. But the skills were not taught out of context; they were to be taught from an experiential and interdisciplinary approach.

If, for example, the group of students plan to canvass, the language arts phase of the program could concentrate on an appropriate verbal skill, the social studies area could be devoted to the study of the population to be canvassed in terms of economic, social, religious factors and the implications of those factors, the math area could be given over to statistical breakdowns, charts, etc.

Introduction to Academic Curriculum

The writers of the curriculum believed that the teachers needed to monitor the students' engagement and adjust the content and methodology to maintain the interest of the student. The student's interest depended a great deal on his and her ability to understand and learn the material. This in turn would be dependent upon:

1. developing positive relationships between teacher and student as well as among students;
2. not overwhelming the students with more information than they can learn at a given time;
3. switching activities whenever one is not engaging the students; and
4. as much as possible, using the students' own experiences as the content of the curriculum.

(See Non-Material Teaching Suggestions for Freedom Schools)

### **The Citizenship Curriculum**

The second part of the curriculum, partly an adaptation by educator Noel Day from a curriculum he had created during the Boston school boycott, taught students to see themselves as initiators of social change. The curriculum contained exercises in naming the power structure and analyzing how it worked. They were also asked to name their own reality and to contrast their reality with reality of more privileged whites. This section contained two sets of guiding questions:

#### ***Basic Set of Questions:***

1. *Why are we (students and teachers) in Freedom Schools?*
2. *What is the freedom movement?*
3. *What alternatives does the freedom movement offer us?*

#### ***Secondary Set of Questions:***

1. *What does the majority culture have that we want?*
2. *What does the majority culture have that we don't want?*
3. *What do we have that we want to keep?*

These organizing questions were repeated throughout the seven units of Part II, the Citizenship Curriculum.

- Unit I: The Negro in Mississippi (comparison of the student's reality with that of others)
- Unit II: The Negro in the North
- Unit III: Myths about the Negro (examining the apparent reality)
- Unit IV: The Power Structure
- Unit V: Poor whites, poor Negroes, and their fears
- Unit VI: Soul Things and Material Things
- Unit VII: The Movement:
  - Part 1: Freedom Rides and Sit-Ins
  - Part 2: COFO's Political Program

The argument being presented in the Citizenship Curriculum was something like this: Your life can be better than it is right now (Unit I) but going north will not improve it (Unit II). You need

to stay in Mississippi and fight to improve the schools, housing, and hospitals that are available to you. This fight has not been waged in the past because Negroes have internalized the myths about them (Unit III) and face a white power structure that permeates all aspects of life (Unit IV). The rich white elites that control the power structure have been able to enlist poor whites by playing on their fears—poor whites are victims as well (Unit V). As long as poor Negroes and poor whites desire “material things” over “soul things,” they can be manipulated by fear and thus effectively deprived of both material and soul things (Unit VI). Direct action and political action are instruments of social change (Unit VII). At the end of the curriculum, students were encouraged to become actively involved in the process of social change.

### Case Studies

The purpose of the case studies was to provide the teachers and students with documents and data supporting the content of the curriculum, and to provide lesson plans where possible. Their origin and quality was diverse, some were written or assembled specifically for the Freedom Schools, others were provided by different organizations. In the case studies, students were given a problem and were actively involved in the creation of a response. “Teachers were to focus not on teaching facts but on teaching students to draw upon their own experiences, to relate the case studies to current situations in Mississippi, and to derive suggestions to solving problems in their own area.”<sup>13</sup>

### Guide to Negro History

Authored by historian and Freedom School Coordinator Staughton Lynd and based on Bea Young and Barbara Jones’ work, the Guide to Negro History presented to the students previously untold stories of resistance, accomplishment, and heroism. The Guide not only challenged the status of the white version of history, it provided models for action. For the first time, students heard stories of slave rebellions aboard the Amistad and in Haiti; the heroes of the Confederacy and the myths of the Old South were discarded and were replaced with new heroes and new stories.

Once the schools had started, the importance of African American history and the great desire of students to learn more about their own place in history became very obvious. The Freedom School in Jackson organized a special Negro History program in the second half of the summer, and wrote additional teaching material covering the 20<sup>th</sup> century (see History Addendum I, History Addendum II, and Negro History Study Questions).

### **Preparations for Teaching: The Orientation**

The 280 Freedom Summer volunteers who were assigned to be teachers in the Freedom Schools took part in the second of two, one week-long orientation sessions held in June at Western College for Women in Oxford, Ohio. The volunteers, few of whom were professional teachers, received an introduction into the political and economic conditions of Mississippi, in the type of education their students would have received in the state’s segregated schools, and in techniques which might help open the minds of their students to new ideas and possibilities. Historian Howard Zinn described the advice the teachers were given at Oxford:

You’ll arrive in Ruleville, in the Delta. It will be 100 degrees, and you’ll be sweaty and dirty. You won’t be able to bathe often or sleep well or eat good food. The first day of school, there may be four teachers and three students. And the local Negro minister will phone to say you



can't use his church basement after all, because his life has been threatened. And the curriculum we've drawn up—Negro history and American government—may be something you know only a little about yourself. Well, you'll knock on doors all day in the hot sun to find students. You'll meet on someone's lawn under a tree. You'll tear up the curriculum and teach what you know.<sup>14</sup>

The dangers the teachers would face were communicated to them dramatically with the disappearance of CORE workers James Chaney and Michael Schwerner, and summer volunteer Andrew Goodman. The three had participated in the first orientation, Schwerner and Chaney as staff, and had left for Mississippi on the weekend before the volunteer teachers arrived for their orientation. They intended to investigate a church burning that had occurred after the congregation had voted to house a Freedom School. On their way back, they were arrested by the local sheriff, released in the late evening, and disappeared. The worry about the three civil rights workers hung over the week-long orientation, and on the last day of the orientation, Bob Moses announced that the SNCC staff was convinced that the three had been murdered. After this announcement, Staughton Lynd spent part of the evening counseling teachers who were reconsidering their decision to go to Mississippi. Kirsty Powell, as one of the volunteer teachers, questioned the emphasis at Oxford on the dangers of going (see [A Report, Mainly on Ruleville](#)). Writing after the summer was over, Powell reflected that

The main effect of Oxford (was it the main design?) was to bring each of us to the point of asking: "Do I really believe in this enough to go? Ought I go? Do I want to go? This was as it should have been, I think. At the time I felt that such emphasis was placed on preparing for the dangers . . . that we did scant justice to the job of preparing to teach or of understanding the meaning of the Freedom School concept. . . . The Freedom School sessions . . . could have been bettered. . . . The Curriculum was excellent, but . . . it was not used as well as it deserved . . . partly . . . because it wasn't really explored at Oxford. . . .<sup>15</sup>

The first Freedom School teachers arrived in Mississippi in late June, planning to open twenty schools with approximately one thousand students. Like SNCC field secretaries and other summer volunteers, the teachers stayed in the homes of local people. Classrooms were found anywhere the black community was willing to situate them—in churches, in basements, on porches, under trees. Attendance was entirely voluntary; part of a teacher's task was to canvass for students. Like voter registration workers, teachers knocked on doors, explained their purpose, and encouraged participation. Often, to establish their link with the community, they were accompanied by local teenagers who had showed up at the COFO office.

Word of the schools spread from one student to another, and gradually the classes began to fill. The anticipated enrollment of one thousand grew, day by day, student by student, to two thousand. Classes were attended not only by the teenagers for whom they were planned but by younger children and adults.

## THE SCHOOLS IN PRACTICE

It is not our purpose to impose a particularly set of conclusions. Our purpose is to encourage the asking of questions, and hope that society can be improved.

Introduction,  
Citizenship Curriculum

Like the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, the Freedom School was an alternative and not an imitation. Historically, Mississippi's schools for African American children had perpetuated the notion that whiteness was a norm from which all peoples of color deviated. The black child would have been at best invisible and at worst humiliated. An education which perpetuated self-rejection could not lead to significant change in the political status of African Americans. What good were the schools and libraries of Mississippi if within them the black child had no history, no voice, and no self-respect? In the Freedom School, the child was to be taught to question and to create.

Stokely Carmichael, veteran of the Freedom Rides and director of the COFO project in Greenwood, Mississippi, conducted a Freedom School class "like participatory democracy—in which leaders questioned, the mass of people guided, and any idea for change was regarded as a realistic possibility."<sup>16</sup> Using language as a means of discussing racial divisions, Carmichael wrote four sentences on the left side of the board in local black dialect and, on the right side, four in standard English.

STOKELY: Will society reject you if you don't speak like on the right side of the board? Gladys said society would reject you.

GLADYS: You might as well face it, man! What we gotta do is go out and become middle class. If you can't speak good English, you don't have a car, a job, or anything.

STOKELY: If society rejects you because you don't speak good English, should you learn to speak good English?

CLASS: No!

ALMA: I'm tired of doing what society say. . . . People ought just to accept each other. . . . If I change for society, I wouldn't be free anyway. . . . If the majority speaks on the left, then a minority must rule society? Why do we have to change to be accepted by the minority group?

STOKELY: Let's think about two questions for next time: What is society? Who makes the rules for society?<sup>17</sup>

Everything about the Freedom schools was fluid in order to link the reality of the students' lives to the goal of social and economic justice for all. The teachers taught whatever was needed and requested by the students, from typing to French. They were encouraged to modify the curriculum as needed, but to stick with the question and answer method. "The paper curriculum that Alice and I had produced was for the most part set aside as teachers improvised: writing school newspapers, typing, French, and poetry were among the most popular subjects," wrote Lynd later.<sup>18</sup> The actual experience of the Freedom Schools was created by students and teachers in active and often spontaneous collaboration. As lawyer and summer volunteer Len Holt stated:

From the beginning, the schools were a challenge to the insistent principle that everyone had talked about so much: flexibility. Where the initial plans had been for only the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades, one found sitting in the informal circles youngsters with the smooth black faces and wondering eyes of the impish faces of nine and ten who were mere fifth-graders. Flexibility. And there just behind teen-aged boys—with slender, cotton-picking muscles—were sets of gnarled hands and the care-chiseled faces of grandmothers, some of whom said they thought they were in the seventies (birth records for the old are almost non-existent). Flexibility.<sup>19</sup>

In Freedom School classes, the teachers used many of the methods—role playing, music, and open-ended discussion—that had been honed in the movement of which the schools were a crucial part. Students were taught to question, discuss and debate so they could begin to formulate their own thoughts, thoughts that would necessarily lead to action.<sup>20</sup> “The kind of teaching that was done in the Freedom Schools was, despite its departure from orthodoxy—or more likely, because of it—just about the best kind there is. . . . (The teachers) taught, not out of textbooks, but out of life, trying to link the daily headlines with the best and deepest of man’s intellectual tradition”<sup>21</sup> (see Notes on Teaching in Mississippi).

### **Supervision and Finances**

The compilers of the FSC believed that accountability needed to be incorporated into the program itself. The Basic and Secondary Questions that were to be “reintroduced periodically” were to “both permit an on-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the curriculum, and to provide students with recurring opportunities for perceiving their own growth in sophistication.”<sup>22</sup> Assessment and evaluation occurred on the level and at the time that it could do the most good—both the student and teacher were the primary evaluators. A second-level evaluation occurred at the state organizational level in order to support the work at the site level. The Freedom Schools were instructed to write regular reports and send them to the COFO office in Jackson (see A Report, Mainly on Ruleville). These reports were used to create regular press releases and profiles (see Profiles of Typical Freedom Schools).

The teachers were expected not only to pay their own way but to assist in fundraising. But as much as possible, COFO attempted to fund the Freedom Schools in terms of food (for students,) rent, transportation, equipment, phone bills, if not salaries for the teachers. One early planning budget suggested (in 1964 dollars): Hattiesburg, \$2,000; Meridian, \$1,300; Holly Springs, \$1,000; Ruleville, \$700. The variety in budgets depended on the relative resources of the community as well as the money the COFO organizations were able to raise nationally. Some towns’ organizations could raise more money than others in order to pay for that which could not be acquired through donations. Some towns were able to have space and equipment donated.<sup>23</sup> In the end, the Freedom Schools ran on a shoestring budget; Staughton Lynd estimated that less than \$2000 passed through the Jackson office, and most of that was used for film rentals.<sup>24</sup>

Many supplies, especially books for the libraries of the Community Centers, were collected before the summer began. A Jackson COFO memo sent out to “Everybody working with the Mississippi Freedom Summer Project” suggested appealing to manufacturers to donate equipment such as tape recorders and movie projectors. The memo asked “everybody” to solicit libraries across the country for donations based on the specific book list provided. A Community Center brochure indicated that national unions were raising money to buy books for the Community Centers.

The reality of the Freedom Schools seemed to conform to Staughton Lynd's image of a guerrilla army which “swims in the sea” of the people among whom it lives.<sup>25</sup>

### **The Freedom School Classrooms**

The actual schedule varied from school to school, depending on the needs of the students and the local public school schedule. The Ruleville Freedom School, for example, was scheduled as follows:

9:00-9:15                      Civil rights songs

9:30-10:30	Core classes: Negro history and Citizenship curriculum
10:30-11:30	Choice of dance, drama, art, auto mechanics, guitar and folksinging, or sports
12:00-2:00	School closed
2:00-4:00	Classes in French, religion, crafts, music, playwriting, journalism
4:00	Seminar on non-violence <sup>26</sup>

### Discussion

The Purpose of the freedom schools is to help [the students] begin to question

*Notes on Teaching in Mississippi*

At the center of the curriculum was education's most powerful tool: the question. The questions were not meant to be answered by the individual student, but by the group. The basic and secondary set of questions did not ask: "What alternatives does the Freedom Movement offer me?" or "What does the majority culture have that I want?" The questions asked: "What does it offer us?" And: ". . .that we want?" Group discussion was the tool that made this community building approach possible.

To students accustomed to memorization and rote learning, discussion was crucial in creating voice and teaching them to value themselves and their classmates. Chairs were arranged in a circle to alter the concept of the teacher as an authority who could not be challenged. Teachers began with introductory questions and then followed up with probing questions. Frequently the teachers asked the students, "How do you feel about this?" Students were encouraged to ask questions as well.

Anything could serve as the basis for a discussion—local events, history, personal experience. "The teachers asked questions and the students talked," wrote Len Holt. "The students could and did say what they thought to be important, and no idea was ridiculed or forbidden—an immeasurably traumatic joy for the souls of young black folk."<sup>27</sup> A teacher from the Vicksburg Freedom School wrote:

I read to them from Thomas Wolfe's *Look Homeward Angel* and from Martin Luther King's *I Have a Dream*, then had them write speeches as if they were Senators urging passage of the civil rights bill. I tried to extend the idea of oppression beyond race. If you pick on a small kid with glasses and beat him up, aren't you acting the same as the white segregationists? I asked them.<sup>28</sup>

Another teacher helped his students define the word "skeptical." "We should feel free to think as we want, question whomever we like, whether it's our parents, our minister, our teachers, yes, me, right here. Don't take my word for things. Check up on them. Be *skeptical*."<sup>29</sup>

### Plays

The viewing and creation of plays was an important part of the experience of many Freedom School students. In attending a production of *In White America*, many students saw live theater for the first time. Martin Duberman's documents-based drama inspired students and teachers to dramatize African American history for themselves. At the Holly Springs Freedom School, students created a play based on the life and death of Medgar Evers. In a discussion of the events of Evers's life, one student remarked, "I don't think of him as really dead. I feel that from his grave is growing a huge tree which is spreading seeds of freedom all over."<sup>30</sup> The child's

metaphor became the title of the play: “Seeds of Freedom.” At the end of the drama, the narrator states:

And this is a play about freedom . . . about us! Yes, us, because every step we take along the freedom road, every time we act, every time we do something to move forward . . . we plant a seed. And seeds are blowing in the wind today.<sup>31</sup>

In Milestone, Mississippi, the Freedom School play was presented at the end of a local community meeting. The play dramatized events in African American history, from slavery to the present, and ended with an exhortation to the audience:

I am the American Negro.  
 You have seen my past; you have known my past.  
 And you have seen the trouble I’ve seen.  
 Today we have seen many men die  
 Because they stood for their rights.  
 Today we have seen three men disappear  
 For joining our fight.  
 Tomorrow many more will die.  
 And many more will suffer,  
 But we’ve begun and we are not turning back  
 And someday, somehow, we shall overcome!<sup>32</sup>

The Ruleville Freedom School created a puppet play in which the knight Bob Moses fought a wicked witch named Segregation. In some schools, the students used their own experience as the basis for drama. At the Ruleville Freedom School, a play was created from a protest staged by the students; in Gulfport, students composed a short play entitled *Memories of Freedom School* (see Notes on Teaching, Noel Day, “Remarks about Method”).

### Role Playing

Role playing was used not only to help students understand concepts but to prepare them for direct action. “Kids that age are natural actors,” explained a Freedom School teacher. “And it puts them in other people’s shoes. We don’t want to win easy arguments over straw foes. They have got to be tough thinkers, tough arguers.”<sup>33</sup> In one classroom, students debated the arguments against the Civil Rights bill offered by conservative presidential candidate Barry Goldwater. Goldwater’s arguments were listed on the board, and one student as Goldwater defended them against counter-arguments from the class. As it had been in the movement, role playing was also used to prepare students for the direct action of canvassing and picketing.

### Music

As it was in the movement, music was a significant part of the curriculum in each of the Freedom School. Most schedules included a daily session of the singing of Freedom songs. The Mississippi Caravan of Music paid several visits to Freedom School classrooms; in these visits, folksingers like Pete Seeger introduced students to songs of the movement and linked the students’ experiences, through folk music, to the experiences of people in other countries. In Gulfport, the school day ended with the singing of “We Shall Overcome.”

There was one special song, a very solemn song. It requires everyone to gather in a circle and join hands for a time, each thinking in his own mind about the meaning of freedom and about people like Medgar Evers, Herbert Lee, and the three civil rights workers in Neshoba County, and all the others who have died fighting for freedom in Mississippi. . . . The song lets students and teachers know the pattern of their lives, that all the great number of years which comprise a life is not so many after all when there is freedom to be fought for.<sup>34</sup>

### Poetry

Poetry was seen as a crucial means of expression, a means by which students long silenced gave form and shape to their feelings and aspirations. A poem by a twelve-year-old girl in the Biloxi Freedom School was a response to the question “What is wrong?”

What is wrong with me everywhere I go  
No one seems to look at me.  
Sometimes I cry.

I walk through woods and sit on a stone.  
I look at the stars and I sometimes wish.

Probably if my wish ever comes true,  
Everyone will look at me.<sup>35</sup>

The poetry, shared with the class, was part of the process of unsilencing, as well as a means of linking their personal pain to the oppression they faced as blacks in Mississippi. In Harmony, Mississippi, thirteen-year-old Ida Ruth Griffith, read a poem to a class held under the trees:

I am Mississippi-fed,  
I am Mississippi-bred,  
Nothing but a poor, black boy.

I am a Mississippi slave,  
I shall be buried in a Mississippi grave,  
Nothing but a poor, dead boy.

Some students angrily challenged the poet’s use of the word “slave”; others defended it. “She’s right,” one student argued. “We are. Can your poppa vote? Can mine? Can our folks eat anywhere they want to?”<sup>36</sup> Students also read the works of many other poets—Langston Hughes, Gertrude Stein, Robert Frost, and e. e. cummings, for example—and often used these works as models for their own.

### Newspapers

Almost every one of the Freedom Schools published a newspaper. This action was in itself radical in a state whose press was controlled by the interests of the white power structure; in many communities, these student newspapers were the first alternative presses. Freedom School newspapers contained student poetry, announcements about political demonstrations, editorials, and reports of local events (see Excerpts of Student Work and Freedom School Data).

### Political Action

The direct link between the classroom and the community encouraged by the Citizenship Curriculum often occurred in the Freedom School Classrooms. The Freedom School was in many cases literally a school without walls, and passers-by could be drawn into the discussions. “One day three Negro ladies trudged by, looking angry and forlorn, on their way back from the courthouse, where they had just learned that their applications for voter registration had been rejected. The teacher called them over to tell what had happened. Thus the students learned of the registration procedures and how to help their parents pass the exams.”<sup>37</sup> In Jackson, Mississippi, Freedom School students and teachers organized a response to an announcement that African American parents would be allowed to register their children at a previously all-white public school. In classroom discussions and role playing, students explored their apprehensions about the consequences for parents who registered to vote; a teacher and student volunteers visited over seventy families and encouraged them to attend a prayer meeting organized by local ministers to support registration. When only one mother attended the meeting, students returned to the seventy families to urge them to register. Eleven of the forty-three eligible children were registered; this number represented progress for Mississippi. After realizing that black public school teachers were afraid to jeopardize their jobs by registering to vote, students at the Ruleville Freedom School performed role plays to encourage their teachers to vote and practiced picketing. With the support of their teacher, students wrote a letter announcing their intention to the principal and faculty, and successfully picketed the local high school. In many Freedom Schools, students shared the work of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. “It’s what the school was about—educating students for involvement in changing social conditions,” wrote teacher Pam Allen of the Holly Springs Freedom School. “[The] main work was registering people into the MFDP” (see Report, Mainly on Ruleville (excerpt) and New Houses of Liberty).

### **The Freedom School Convention**

Throughout Freedom Summer, Freedom School students had been educated for political empowerment. While the voting-age adults attended the MFDP state convention in Jackson, the students held their own convention in Meridian on August 6-8, and addressed many of the same issues. The students held a parallel convention, rather than leaving politics to their elders. Just as the students were asked to do voter registration work, they participated in the convention process as well. Edwin King described the MFDP as the PTA of the Freedom Schools. The Freedom Schools and the MFDP were, in many ways, the same organization.

*Freedom Schools—Final Report, 1964*, suggested that the best way to evaluate the effectiveness of the Freedom Schools was to read the *Program* from the Freedom School Convention in Meridian. The *Report* wanted the reader to “Note particularly the proposal for a state-wide school boycott. School boycotts are already in progress in Shaw and Harmony. A boycott is about to begin in Indianola. There will be many such boycotts during the winter.” If the primary purpose of the Freedom Schools was to empower students to take direct action, the existence of school boycotts was evidence of the success of the curriculum.

In an article he wrote for *Freedomways* in 1965, Staughton Lynd proposed “If I were to start a Freedom School now (and we are about to start one in New Haven), I would suggest: Begin with a Freedom School Convention and let that provide your curriculum” (see The Freedom Schools: Concept and Organization). He began to come to this conclusion during the second day of the Freedom School Convention during which the students had begun to reject the advice of

the adults. They had discovered that they could do everything themselves. What came out of this convention was a political program. Lynd believed at that time that “it would have been better if the schools had begun with such a convention, and if the statewide program brought back to each school by its delegates had then become the curriculum for the summer.” Lynd worried that the Civil Rights movement was being “strangely neglectful of program.” The Freedom School Convention delegates, on the other hand, were not being so neglectful. Lynd anticipated that the Freedom Schools could provide future political candidates who would be able “to declare themselves intelligently on a variety of issues” if the Freedom School Platform became the new curriculum of the Freedom Schools (see Platform of the Freedom School Convention).

### **FREEDOM SCHOOLS BEYOND FREEDOM SUMMER**

QUESTION: Even with all this, how can we hope to win in Mississippi?

ANSWER: We won’t win, at least not for a very long time, unless the federal government throws its weight behind us.

QUESTION: What can we do to force the federal government to help us?

ANSWER: We can continue working constantly to show the world how horrible Mississippi is, and continue trying to change it.

From Unit VII, Part I,

The MFDP’s attempt to challenge the seating of the regular Democrats at the Democratic National Convention was unsuccessful. However, the bitterness of defeat of at the convention was only the bitterness of losing a battle and not the war. Challenging the MDP in Atlantic City was only one of the goals of Freedom Summer. A sea change in consciousness was the other. And there was evidence that such a change had occurred, as Liz Fusco described in her report at the end of the summer (see Freedom Schools in Mississippi, 1964).

Many remained committed to continuing to work hard to change things in Mississippi. Freedom Schools continued to operate in the fall of 1964. The Mississippi Freedom Labor Union was organized in January of 1965 at a Freedom School Discussion. Federal funds became available through the federal Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. In 1965, a group of Freedom Summer workers used federal funding to establish day care centers for preschoolers and the FDP continued to register voters.

Once the summer ended, most volunteers returned to their homes but some stayed. Liz Fusco, who had been the head of the Indianola Freedom School, became coordinator for the fall program. In a report entitled “Freedom Centers—What’s Happening,” dated September, 1964, Liz Fusco described some progress and some discouragement. Some Freedom Schools suspended daytime classes and held adult classes in the evening to support voter registration; other schools continued with daytime classes for children whose regular public school classes had been suspended for cotton picking. Many places maintained community centers which housed libraries and sponsored after-school tutoring. The Mississippi Student Union (MSU), an organization of teenagers, offered support for the continuing Freedom Schools. In Ruleville, “Kindergarten in the daytime, high school and adults in the evenings. Extensive use of library. . . . The adults meet two nights a week for reading and discussion. The MSU kids hold Sunday-afternoon meetings instead of Saturday-night dances, then refreshments.” In Cleveland, the “MSU is active in school, refusing by letter to raise money by the campus queen drive. Talking about eating in public places



and boycotting stores.” In Tchula, Fusco reported, “In process of building new community center. Freedom School staff mostly in jail” (see [Freedom School Data](#)).

Charles Cobb wrote that the Freedom School program, like the Movement, was “a victim of its success.” Freedom Summer had focused the attention of the country on Mississippi, and some change followed. “We had in one sense accomplished what we set out to do: a public accommodations law had been passed; a voting rights law seemed certain. Mississippi was now prominently on the political map. New organizations, like the Mississippi Child Development Group, with deeper financial pockets, were establishing themselves.” Federal programs like Head Start turned the problems of compensatory education over to government.

Cobb wrote, “Perhaps the fact that the schools existed at all was their greatest success. As Freedom School Director Staughton Lynd noted in a report to COFO that summer, the schools ‘helped to loosen the hard knot of fear and to organize the Negro community.’”<sup>38</sup> Lynd stated in a 1964 newspaper interview that the schools may have sown the seeds of future social change by briefly providing an alternative to Mississippi rigid caste system. “Mississippi is never going to be the same. There are 2,000 youngsters who now know that they can relate to whites on a basis of equality. These kids want to be educated; they reach out for it. If the Negro gets the vote, these are the people who will be in the legislature in future years.”<sup>39</sup>

But the Freedom Schools were neither the beginning nor the end of the process of linking education to social change. Their antecedents were many: the Highlander Folk School, the Citizens Education Program of the SCLC, the classes in nonviolent resistance held by James Lawson in Nashville, the role plays in Montgomery churches in preparation for the bus boycott, and Nonviolent High, to name only a few examples. Certain principles of education for social transformation were embedded in the Freedom School Curricula:

- The creation of an honest and egalitarian relationship between teacher and student
- The valuing and naming of the students’ own experience
- The asking of open-ended questions
- The presentation to students of an authentic and empowering view of themselves and their history
- The vision of the arts as a transformative force
- The emphasis on skills necessary for action and effective participation in the world
- The establishment of a direct line from classroom to community

In applying these principles, the Freedom Schools experienced some success and some frustration. There were some immediate victories and other victories more subtle and impossible to measure. The experience of these small and determined groups of teachers and students raised as many questions as it answered. The questions raised by the Freedom Schools and their predecessors are profound. Are schools servants of the existing social system, no matter how unjust that system might be, and is the task of teachers to modify student aspiration to ensure their students a place in the world as it is? Or is the classroom a place for transformation?

After visiting the Freedom Schools in 1964, educator and historian Howard Zinn reflected about their importance beyond Mississippi.

The Freedom Schools’ challenge to the social structure of Mississippi was obvious from the start. Its challenge to American education as a whole is more subtle. There is, to begin with, the provocative suggestion that an entire school system can be created in any community outside the

official order and critical of its suppositions. But beyond that, other questions were posed by the Mississippi experiment. . . . Can we, somehow, bring teachers and students together, not through the artificial sieve of certification and examination but on the basis of their common attraction to an exciting social goal? Can we solve the old educational problem of teaching children crucial values, while avoiding a blanket imposition of the teacher's ideas? Can this be done by honestly accepting as an educational goal that we want better human beings in the rising generation than we had in the last, and that this requires a forthright declaration that the educational process cherishes equality, justice, compassion and world brotherhood? . . . And cannot the schools have a running, no-holds-barred exchange of views about alternative ways to these goals? . . . Would it be possible to declare boldly that the aim of the schools is to find solutions for poverty, for injustice, for race and national hatred, and to turn all educational efforts into a national striving for those solutions?

Perhaps people can begin, here and there (not waiting for the government, but leading it) to set up other pilot ventures, imperfect but suggestive, like the one last summer in Mississippi. Education can, and should, be dangerous.<sup>40</sup>

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## ***TEACHING MATERIAL: QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES***

to be used with the Mississippi Freedom School Curriculum

**By Kathy Emery and Linda Gold**

Editors' Note: These questions and activities, taken together, are not intended to elicit a thorough understanding of the Curriculum. Our hope is that these suggestions give teachers and students some help in developing their own questions and activities.

### **Personal Writing (Journal writing, essays, autobiographies):**

Items 1-3 can be used particularly for journal writing. As students read the Curriculum, they can write about what they are reading from a personal and non-structured fashion as the basis for more analytical writing or in preparation for discussion.

1. Select **quotations** from the curriculum and use it as a basis for reflecting on your own experience. Choose a quotation which moves you, for example, one with which you strongly agree or disagree.
2. For each "**Concept**" introduced by the Freedom School Curriculum, write a response, e.g., a personal reflection, related experience, idea for a new program or vision of . . .
3. Select "**Questions**" from the Curriculum and respond to them personally. For example, "To what extent do we confer power on others? To what extent is that power real? What wouldn't you sell?"
4. What is the relationship of ignorance to fear? guilt to fear? fear to hate? Use your own personal experiences to illustrate your answer (See Unit V).

### **Unit III Questions and Activities**

1. What is assimilation? Do the three secondary questions advocate assimilation for African Americans? What is the difference between assimilation and integration. How do your answers to the questions in Unit III affect your position on the resegregation and unequal funding of US public schools today?
2. How can the Freedom School lesson on examining social myths be applied to your experience? (Select an advertisement, a newspaper article, a work of literature which you've read in school, or a lesson from your history text. Apply to it the questions raised by the Freedom School curriculum: What is taught in the schools and through other media? What are the myths of our society? What or whose purposes do these myths serve?)
3. "Concept. What education is." How would you answer the questions in this section if applied to you and your school? What do people learn in school besides reading, writing an arithmetic?"
4. Compare the "Mississippi Plan" (in Guide to Negro History, Part III, Reconstruction in Mississippi) to the situation in Mississippi the early 1960s. What are the essential

beliefs/tactics/ideas of the Mississippi Plan? Do you see any of these tactics in your interactions with authority?

5. Guide to Negro History: Are there any parallels between the presence of Federal Troops in Reconstruction and the presence of Federal Troops in the South during the Civil Rights era of the 1960s (e.g., Little Rock or Oxford)?

### **Historiography exercise I**

The Guide to Negro History contains the following sections:

Brief Synopsis of the Amistad Incident

Part I: Origins of Prejudice

Part II: Negro Resistance to Oppression

Part III: Reconstruction and the Beginning of Segregation

Divide the class into four groups. Each group reads one section of the *Guide*. After reading one's section, look at the American History textbook (or curriculum) that is used by your school (if there are several, borrow copies of each one. If this is problematic, your local library should have copies of various textbooks). Compare the content, style and organization of the material in your section of the *Guide* with the comparable section in the American History text (or curriculum) used by your school. Write a report to present to the rest of the class (preferably with visual aids) that reveals the results of your comparative analysis. For example, if there is no mention of the Amistad Incident, is there mention of similar incidents? What kinds of slave revolts are mentioned in the text? What role are Presidents given by the textbook(s) in relationship to slavery? How is J.Q. Adams portrayed in general by the text? Van Buren? When does slavery appear in your textbook/curriculum? How would one's understanding of slavery be different if the *Guide* were incorporated into your textbook/curriculum?

Keep in mind the following issues when doing your research and analysis:

1. What are the criteria for selection of the details in both the *Guide* and the textbook used at your school? What does the *Guide* suggest the criteria may be?
2. What is the purpose of the textbook; according to its authors (read preface or intro); according to the teacher (interview teacher) who uses the text or, according to those responsible (interview these people) for selecting the textbook for use in your school.
3. Does the textbook version of history inspire political activity on your part, does it discourage it? How so?

Some considerations when doing a comparative analysis: What information is the same in each text? What information is in one but not in the other? Which text promotes the purposes of the Freedom School Curriculum the best? How does your comparative analysis suggest what might be the purposes of the curriculum as defined by the textbook?

## Historiography exercise II

The Guide to Negro History suggests that teachers use the structure of the Amistad Lesson Plan as a guide. This lesson is structured thematically as opposed to many history lessons that are structured chronologically. The center of the lesson plan is a chronologically story of the specific incident that Spielberg has now made famous in his movie *Amistad*. But the lesson plan identifies several issues that “spin off” like spokes from the hub of a wheel. These issues – Slave Revolts, The Case in the Courts, Abolitionism, African Background and Slave Trade – become topics of study in their own right. The theory behind this part of the Freedom School Curriculum seems to be that the students’ interest in these topics is generated by the Amistad story.

1. Using the Amistad Unit as a model, construct a similar lesson plan for an historical incident of your choice. You may want to take a story from your own ethnic, religious, gender, national background or sexual orientation. For gays and lesbians, the story of Harvey Milk might come to mind. Try to pick a story that you are interested in. Then see what issues/topics can be “spun off” from it—i.e. issues and topics that are also of interest because of their connections to the “hub” issue.
2. Contrast the story/theme approach of the Amistad model with those experiences you have had in past history courses.
3. Do history textbooks in your school or in other schools use the story/theme approach? Can you make a guess as to why they do or don’t?
4. Why does the Freedom School Curriculum place such a high priority on “student interest”? Does your school place an equally high priority on student interest? Why or why not?

## Unit IV

### 1. **Research/Activity:**

- a. Each student bring in at least one newspaper article concerning the global economy (anything that has to do with goods made in one country and sold in another, or about changes in one country affecting the economic condition of another).
- b. In class, in groups of 4 or 5, each student explains the contents of his or her articles to others. As each student explains or reads his or her article the rest of the group takes notes trying to answer the following questions: (1) Who are the winners? the losers? (2) How do they win? lose?
- c. After discussing and taking notes on all the articles, the group writes a joint paper guided by the following questions: (1) Who is making money off of the global economy? (2) What are the explanations for this? (3) Do the explanations justify the money making?

3. **Research:** After reading the Mississippi Power Structure, research comparable statistics for your state today. For example, what the major job categories and their pay scales in your state? Which racial/ethnic, sex and age groups dominate each category? Much of this can be found on the web.

4. Create a power chart of any of the following: school district, town, county, state, or nation Do you know anyone who has challenged authority? What happened to them when they did? Can you create a composite example from the real life examples that you know of people who have challenged authority? Does this composite example illustrate the power structure chart of your school? town/city? state? the nation?

5. Who were the Dixiecrats? What powers did they have? Does William Greider in *Who Will Tell the People* ? (PBS video or in book form) make an argument that a similar power structure operates today? What myths support such a power structure?

6. **Research Activity:** This unit includes the case study on Nazi Germany. One purpose of this study was to study the Nazi methods of control so they “might be applied to a comparative analysis of the Negro in the South in order to gain greater insight into . . . [the] means by which this system can be resisted successfully and overcome.” Does this differ from Alinsky’s following assertion?

In other words, use the Case study of *Nazi Germany* to evaluate Saul Alinsky’s claim that “Ghandi’s passive resistance would never had had a chance against a totalitarian state such as that of the Nazis . . . George Orwell, in his essay *Reflection on Gandhi*, made some pertinent observations on this point: ‘he believed in arousing the world, which is only possible if the world gets a change to hear what you are doing.’ It is difficult to see how Gandhi’s methods could be applied in a country where opponents of the regime disappear in the middle of the night and are never heard of again. Without a free press and the right of assembly it is impossible, not merely to appeal to outside opinion, but to bring a mass movement into being or even to make your intentions known to your adversary” (pp. 41-42, *Rules for Radicals*, Vintage Books, New York, 1972)

7. If you were a student in a Freedom School, how would you answer the “Secondary Questions” after having gone through Units I - IV? How would you answer them as a student today?

8. **Historiography:** Compare the descriptions in the Power of the Dixiecrats with comparable passages in the U. S. history texts used in your school. You may have to be a bit creative in your analysis. For example, if your school text has no mention of the 1948 Democratic nominating convention and the States Rights party, then look at the history of the Democratic Party from 1944-64 and compare that to the History section in the case study. You are looking for different versions or emphasis of the same events or what details are included what are left out. Do such differences lead to different interpretations of the past? What is the significance of these interpretations?

## Unit V

1. Read A.S. Neill’s *Summerhill*. What role did fear play in Summerhill? What role does fear play in your school? What happened to those students who choose not to attend classes at Summerhill? Do you like to learn? Under what circumstances have you learned the best? If TV and cinemas didn’t exist, how might people spend their leisure time? What did students at Summerhill do when they become bored?

2. How do the purposes of this unit “train people to be active agents of change”? Are you and your fellow students being trained to be “active agents of social change? Do you think you should be?
3. **ACTIVITY.** As a class, re-enact the stick figure exercise. Is it an effective teaching technique? Write a stick figure exercise that would apply to your life today.
4. The truth shall make you free. How does Unit V support this statement. Are you persuaded?

### **Unit VI**

1. What is the relationship between the structure of an organization and the behavior of people within that organization? (Does a town meeting political structure promote different behavior than one person rule?)
2. What is the relationship between values and behavior? Does one behave according to one’s values? Do we need help in behaving according to one’s values, according to how one believes he or she should act?
3. While this statistic varies depending on the definition of the terms of the statement, it is fair to say that the United States has 5 percent of the world’s population but consumes 30 percent of the world’s resources. Using the principles and concepts of Unit VI, what questions would you ask of this materially unequal situation? What questions can you ask that addresses a different and more just distribution of the world’s resources? Are the world’s resources (forests, minerals, drinking water) dwindling? Is the world’s population growing? How will the United States middle class maintain its material condition in the face of future changes in resources and population should it choose to do so?
4. What current evidence that material well being doesn’t guarantee spiritual well being? What is the evidence today that poverty undermines spiritual well being?
5. Is there an ethical system implicit or explicit in the Freedom School Curriculum (Is there a list of commandments that forbids or demands certain behavior of all human beings)?
6. After reading the Statements of Discipline of Nonviolent Movements, how would you answer the given questions?  
 Was “the movement the germ of a new society?”  
 “Would we want a whole society in which people related to each other as they do in the movement?”

### **Unit VII**

#### *Part I*

1. Why is Part I of this unit organized differently from the other units? (What are the “basic concepts” of Part I?)

2. Create subcategories to Part I. Decide how many there are and what titles to give to each sub-categories.
3. What does Part I reveal about the theory behind “the movement”? the strategy? the tactics?
4. How does the movement define success? failure?

*Part 2, I. COFO*

5. How does a federation of organizations create “unity”, “continuity” and “identity”?
6. Do any of the projects of the COFO programs strike you as particularly radical or surprising? (What does “radical” mean?)
7. What are the four “phases” of the COFO program?

*Part 2, II. Miss Hamer’s Campaign*

8. Why should poor whites have voted for Fannie Lou Hamer and not Jamie Whitten?
9. Why is Hamer and not another MFDP candidate (e.g. Aaron Henry) featured by the curriculum?
10. Why did Hamer run for office if she and her supporters knew that they were going to lose?

*Part 2, III. Other COFO Political Programs*

11. Why is COFO encouraging blacks to participate in the Democratic Party’s precinct, county and district elections when COFO also plans to create a separate Freedom Democratic Party?

*Part 2, IV. Voting in Mississippi*

12. What is the purpose of precinct meetings? How are they democratic in theory but not democratic in practice?
13. At which level is the most power exercised - precinct, county, district, state convention, state primary, state general election, or the National nominating convention?
14. How can the voting laws so effectively discriminate while being so immune to legal accusations of discrimination?
15. Why might the degree of white violence against black voters in a county be proportionate to the ratio of whites to blacks in that country?
16. Were Freedom Days successful? effective? strategic?



*Part 2, V. The Historical Development of white, one party politics*

17. Why was the Compromise of 1877 a pivotal moment for black civil rights?
18. Why would “the small town rich man” contribute money to each of the opposing sides in an election?
19. Why might blacks benefit from the establishment of a Republican Party in the South. Why might they not benefit?

**QUESTIONS for class discussion based on the author’s Introduction, the Curriculum and Supplemental Documents**

1. “To train people to be active agents in bringing about social change.” This is a primary purpose of the Freedom School Curriculum. To what degree is your own study of this curriculum moving you to become an active agent of social change? What are the obstacles in the way of such a change? Must there be a “movement” for individuals to be agents of change? Do individuals start movements (how do movements start?)?
2. How did Kirsty Powell (A Report, mainly on Ruleville) alter the “on paper” version of the Freedom School Curriculum? To what degree did Kirsty Powell implement Noel Day’s advice (Notes on Teaching)? Emerson’s (Non Material Teaching Suggestions)? Did she follow each unit’s directives? To what degree was the “reality” of her experience in Ruleville responsible for this? What implications can be drawn from the difference between curriculum on paper and in practice?
3. Can Ruth Emerson’s teaching theory (Non Material Teaching Suggestions) be accurately described as process rather than goal oriented? Is her approach consistent with the purpose of the Freedom Schools? For example, if the students don’t complete the Citizenship Curriculum, will the students be as effective canvassers as they might be upon completion of the curriculum? Are Emerson and Stembridge (Notes on Teaching) in perfect agreement? fundamental agreement?
4. How does the dominant culture today and the Freedom School Curriculum differ in their use of the following terms: Question, Test, Discussion, Drama.
5. Explain the direct connection between the Freedom Schools and political action. Have you ever experienced this direct connection in your own education?
6. African American culture and traditions were maintained through an oral tradition. The oral tradition is characterized by:
  - a. a strong sense of community, as community is the “library” of the oral tradition.
  - b. A respect for elders as containers of history and story.
  - c. An emphasis on gatherings or rituals as a means of affirming community and sharing stories.
  - d. An emphasis on the strongly felt, immediate experience.

e. An emphasis on song, music, and rhythm as a means of creating an immediate feeling of connection and of sharing history.

How does the Freedom School Curriculum use the strengths of the oral tradition? How are these strengths evident in the Freedom Movement in Mississippi? In the Civil Rights Movement in general?

### **ACTIVITIES BASED ON THE WEBSITE INTRODUCTION, SUPPLEMENTARY DOCUMENTS AND THE CURRICULUM**

**Debate Resolution:** The basic and secondary questions of the Freedom School Curriculum provide the only effective means of evaluating the Curriculum. (see teaching materials in Howard Zinn's *People's History of the United States*, teaching edition, for a description of how to conduct debates)

**For the teacher to share with his or her students:** Compare your philosophy of teaching with that contained within the Freedom School Curriculum. Consider the following issues:

- How do people learn?
- What are optimal learning conditions?
- What are the external as well as internal constraints/obstacles that an individual teacher faces when trying to teach in a public or private school today?

#### **Exercise A - Lesson Plans (research, analysis)**

1. Identify where in your school's curriculum, if at all, the "concepts" of the Freedom School Curriculum are taught.
  - a. If taught in a course at your school, are there specific "lesson plans" devoted to the concept(s)?
  - b. If not taught specifically or explicitly at your school, why not? Does the school believe that such concepts are taught elsewhere? What is the evidence that they are or are not?
2. Write Lesson Plans with the "concepts" of the Freedom School Curriculum but replace the content with that which pertains to your life. Your lesson plan should include the following: statement of purpose; list of materials; introduction; questions; myths that the lesson will destroy. After choosing a concept, you might want to begin by thinking about myths associated with such a concept.
3. What conclusions can you draw about the role "curriculum" plays in the construction of your reality?

#### **Exercise B - Teaching Empowerment (Drama, role-play)**

1. Divide the class into groups of four.

2. Each group chooses two people from the following list of roles: a student at your school (present time); the principal of your school (present time); a teacher at your school (present time); a student's parent (present time); a poor white Mississippi 16 year old (1964); a 16 year old Freedom School student (1964); a white northern Freedom School teacher (1964); a black northern Freedom School teacher (1964); a black southern Freedom school teacher (1964); and the sheriff of Hattiesburg (1964).
3. The group writes an imagined dialogue about education and power between the two persons chosen from the list above. Some of the issues you may want to address in the dialogue are: empowerment; talking about one's feelings; class discussion; knowing how power is exercised; what should teachers know before they teach a class at your school; degree of freedom in asking questions; the kind of transformation that occurs when students are allowed to ask questions; connection of history to what is happening now; and role models in history class.
4. Each group chooses two of its members to act out the dialogue in front of the rest of the class. The entire class can discuss each presentation after it is made.

### **Exercise C - Guidelines for a New Teacher (research, analysis)**

In groups or individually: Compose an introduction for a new teacher at a school.

1. Identify a school other than your own. Arrange permission to interview several students at that school.
2. Write an interview schedule in advance of the actual interviews. When writing the schedule (list of questions in the order you wish to ask them during the interview) keep the following in mind:
  - a. Avoid writing questions to which a "yes" or "no" answer may be given.
  - b. Have several follow up questions prepared to encourage your interviewee to elaborate upon his or her answers to your questions.
  - c. Ask questions that will elicit answers that can be used to fulfill your goal of writing "Notes" for new teachers entering that school. The topics that the interview schedule must address are the following: What are the students like? What do the students demand of their teachers? What are the conditions under which teachers teach?
3. Use the data collected (notes and recorded answers) to write Guidelines for New Teachers in the manner of Stembridge's "Introduction to the Summer" (Notes on Teaching in Mississippi)
4. Ask the principal (or some administrator) of the school for which you wrote your "Introduction" to read it and give you his or her responses to what you wrote. Write up the principal's response.
5. Write an analysis of your experience in this exercise. Base your analysis on a comparison of the school you studied with that of the Freedom Schools in Mississippi in 1964. How and why

does your "Introduction" differ from Stenbridge's? Was the principal's reaction to your "Introduction" predictable? Why or why not? Present results to your class.

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**SUPPLEMENTARY DOCUMENTS**

*"We Shall Overcome"*

***PROSPECTIUS FOR THE MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM SUMMER***

"It can be argued that in the history of the United States democracy has produced great leaders in great crises. Sad as it may be, the opposite has been true in Mississippi. As yet there is little evidence that the society of the closed mind will ever process the moral resources to reform itself, or the capacity for self-examination, or even the tolerance of self-examination."

*From Mississippi: The Closed Society*

By James W. Silver

It has become evident to the civil rights groups involved in the struggle for freedom in Mississippi that political and social justice cannot be won without the massive aid of the country as a whole, backed by the power and authority of the federal government. Little hope exists that the political leaders of Mississippi will steer even a moderate course in the near future (Governor Johnson's inaugural speech notwithstanding); in fact, the contrary seems true: as the winds of change grow stronger, the threatened political elite of Mississippi becomes more intransigent and fanatical in its support of the status quo. The closed society of Mississippi is, as Professor Silver asserts, without the moral resources to reform itself. And Negro efforts to win the right to vote cannot succeed against the extensive legal weapons and police powers of local and state officials without a nationwide mobilization of support.

A program is planned for this summer which will involve the massive participation of Americans dedicated to the elimination of racial oppression. Scores of college students, law students, medical students, teachers, professors, ministers, technicians, folk artists and lawyers from all over the country have already volunteered to work in Mississippi this summer—and hundreds more are being recruited.

Why a project of this size?

1. Projects of the size of those of the last three summers (100 to 150 workers) are rendered ineffective quickly by police threats and detention of members.
2. Previous projects have gotten no national publicity on the crucial issue of voting rights and, hence, have little national support either from public opinion or from the federal government. A large number of students from the North making the necessary sacrifices to go South would make abundantly clear to the government and the public that this is not a situation which can be ignored any longer, and would project an image of cooperation between Northern and white people and Southern Negro people to the nation which will reduce fears of an impending race war.
3. Because of the lack of numbers in the past, all workers in Mississippi have had to devote themselves to voter registration, leaving no manpower for stopgap community education projects which can reduce illiteracy as well as raise the level of education of Negroes. Both of these activities are, naturally, essential to the project's emphasis on voting.
4. Bail money cannot be provided for jailed workers; hence, a large number of people going South would prevent the project from being halted in its initial stages by immediate arrests. Indeed, what will probably happen in some communities is the filling of jails with civil rights workers to overflowing, forcing the community to realize that it cannot dispense with the problem of Negroes' attempting to register simply by jailing "outsiders".

Why this summer?

Mississippi at this juncture in the movement has received too little attention—that is, attention to what the state's attitude really is—and has presented COFO with a major policy decision. Either the civil rights struggle has to continue, as it has in the past few years, with small projects in selected communities with no real progress on any fronts, or there must be a task force of such a size as to force either the state and the municipal governments to change their social and legal structures, or the federal government to intervene on behalf of the constitutional rights of its citizens.

Since 1964 is an election year, the clear-cut issue of voting rights should be brought out in the open. Many SNCC and CORE workers in Mississippi hold the view that Negroes will never vote in large numbers until federal marshals intervene. At any rate, many Americans must be made to realize that the voting rights they so often take for granted involve considerable risk for Negroes in the South. In the larger context of the national civil rights movement, enough progress has been made during the last year that there can be no turning back. Major victories in Mississippi, recognized as the stronghold of racial intolerance in the South, would speed immeasurably the breaking down of legal and social discrimination in both North and South.

The project is seen as a response to the Washington March and an attempt to assure that in the Presidential election year of 1964 all American citizens are given the franchise. The people at work on the project are neither working at odds with the federal government nor at war with the

State of Mississippi. The impetus is *not against* Mississippi but for the right to vote, the ability to read, the aspirations and the training to work.

*Direction of the Project:*

This summer's work in Mississippi is sponsored by COFO, the Council of Federated Organizations, which includes the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and the NAACP, as well as Mississippi community groups. Within the state COFO has made extensive preparations since mid-January to develop structured programs which will put to creative use the talents and energies of the hundreds of expected summer volunteers.

*Voter Registration:* This will be the most concentrated level of activity. Voter registration workers will be involved in an intensive summer drive to encourage as many Negroes as possible to register. They will participate in COFO's Freedom Registration, launched in early February, to register over 400,000 Negroes on Freedom Registration books. These books will be set up in local Negro establishments and will have simplified standards of registration (literacy test and the requirement demanding an interpretation of a section of the Mississippi Constitution will be eliminated). Freedom Registration books will serve as the basis of a challenge of the official books of the state and the validity of "official" elections this fall. Finally, registration workers will assist in the campaigns of Freedom candidates, who are expected to run for seats in all five of the State's Congressional districts and for the seat of Senator John Stennis, who is up for re-election.

*Freedom Schools:*

1. *General Description.* About 25 Freedom Schools are planned, of two varieties: day schools in about 20-25 towns (commitments still pending in some communities) and one or two boarding, or residential, schools on college campuses. Although the local communities can provide school buildings, some furnishings, and staff housing (and, for residential schools, student housing), all equipment, supplies and staff will have to come from outside. A nationwide recruitment program is underway to find and train the people and solicit the equipment needed. In the schools, the typical day will be hard study in the morning, an afternoon break (because it's too hot for an academic program) and less formal evening activities. Because the afternoons are free, students will have an opportunity to work with the COFO staff in other areas of the Mississippi Freedom Summer program, and the additional experience will enrich their contribution to the Freedom School sessions.

a. *Day Schools.* The day schools will accommodate about 50 students, with a staff of 15. There are 20 communities, located in all five Congressional districts of the state, where the people in the community have indicated that they want a Freedom School and are cooperating in finding facilities and housing. These are the towns of some size, where the local Negro communities can provide housing for the staff, and where a suitable building can be located and safely leased. The day schools will attract high-school students from the immediate area only, since there are no provisions planned for living in, but there will be organized contacts—exchanges, sports events, etc.—between day Freedom Schools across the State. The sessions will present similar but not identical material, so the students can profitably attend one or both sessions. This will allow some adjustment for students who must work during the cotton-picking season, and faculty people who are unable to stay six weeks.

b. *Boarding Schools.* The one or two boarding schools will accommodate 150 to 200 students apiece, in a college-campus atmosphere. There will be one six-week session of the

boarding schools. The curriculum will be similar to that of the day schools, but on a more intensive level, and with an additional goal of bringing together and training high-quality student leadership. The boarding schools will recruit students who have displayed some leadership potential and can profit from the more intensive approach.

c. *Curriculum.* The aim of the Freedom Schools' curriculum will be to challenge the student's curiosity about the world, introduce him to his particularly "Negro" cultural background, and teach him basic literacy skills in one integrated problem. That is, the students will study problem areas in the world, such as the administration of justice or the relation between state and federal authority. Each problem area will be built around a specific episode which is close to the experience of Mississippi students. The whole question of the court system, and the place of law in our lives, with many relevant ramifications, can be dealt with in connection with the study of how one civil rights case went through the courts and was ultimately decided in favor of the defendant. The episode of Congressman Jamie Whitten's tractor deal, where Whitten quashed a federal program to train over 2,000 tractor drivers in the Mississippi Delta (because it would have been integrated), can lead one into the whole area of state and federal relations. The campaign of Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer for Congress (running against Jamie Whitten) provides a basis for studying all the forces which are against her, and which have worked against a Negro's even attempting to run for Congress in Mississippi. Planning the COFO project to challenge the regular Mississippi delegation at the Democratic National Convention provides the starting-point for a study of the whole Presidential nomination and election procedures. These and other "case studies" which are used to explore larger problem areas in society will be offered to the students. The Negro history outline, as presently planned, will be divided into sections to be coordinated with the problem-area presentation. In this context, students will be given practice activities to improve their skills with reading and writing. Writing press releases, leaflets, etc., for the political campaigns is one example. Writing affidavits and reports of arrests, demonstrations, trials, etc., which occur during the summer in their towns, will be another. Using the telephone as a campaign tool will both help the political candidates and help students to improve their techniques in speaking effectively in a somewhat formal situation. By using a multidimensional, integrated program, the curriculum can be more easily absorbed into the direct experience of the students.

d. *Students.* Students for the Freedom Schools will be recruited through established contacts with ministers, educators, and other organizational contacts in the state. Around a hundred applications have already been returned, and we do not anticipate that written applications will form the bulk of the students selected. A statewide student organization, the Mississippi Student Union, has recently been formed, and will be important to the recruitment of students. Students who have shown evidence of leadership potential will be encouraged to attend the state-wide boarding schools, to meet students from other parts of the state, and lay the foundation of a much broader student movement.

e. *Staff.* Both professional and nonprofessional teachers will participate in the staffing of the schools. Professional teachers will be sponsored by the professional teachers' associations, the National Council of Churches, the Presbyterian Church and other institutions with educational resources. The nonprofessional teachers will be selected from among the applicants for the summer project. A special delegation of Chicago high-school students, who have taught Negro history to other students their own age under the auspices of Chicago's Amistad Society, will work as student teachers in the Negro history program.



f. *Schedule.* The boarding-school staff and staff for the first session of the day schools will go through a general orientation program with the community center staff, probably held at Mt. Beulah. This orientation will run July 8-12. On July 13, the boarding schools and the first session of the day schools will receive students. Orientation for the teaching staff of the second session of the day schools will be held August 5-9. On August 10, the second session of the day schools will start classes. The sessions will end on August 22 for the boarding school and August 30 for the second-session day school.

*Community Centers:* The community centers program projects a network of community centers across the state. Conceived as along-range institution, these centers will provide a structure for a sweeping range of recreational and educational programs. In doing this, they will not only serve basic needs of Negro communities now ignored by the social service provisions of the State, but will form a dynamic focus for the development of community organization. The educational features of centers will include job-training programs for the unskilled and unemployed, literacy and remedial programs for adults as well as young people, public health programs such as prenatal and infant care, basic nutrition, etc., to alleviate some of the serious health problems of Negro Mississippians, adult education workshops which would deal with family relations, federal service programs, home improvement and other information vital to the needs of Negro communities, and also extracurricular programs for grade-school and high-school students to supplement educational deficiencies and provide opportunity for critical thought and creative expression. Each center would have a well-rounded library because Negroes in many communities now have no access to an adequate library.

Though the community centers program is primarily educational, some of each center's resources would be used to provide much-needed recreational facilities for the Negro community. In most communities in Mississippi the only recreation outside of taverns is the movies, and for Negroes this means segregated movies. If there is a movie theater in the Negro community, it is old, run-down, and shows mostly out of date, third-rate Hollywood films. The film program of the centers will not only provide a more agreeable atmosphere for movies; it will bring films of serious content which are almost never shown in Mississippi, where ideas are rigidly controlled. Other recreational offerings will be music appreciation classes, arts and crafts workshops, drama groups, discussion clubs on current events, literature and Negro achievement, etc., pen-pal clubs, organized sports (where equipment allows), and occasional special performances by outside entertainers, such as folk festivals, jazz concerts, etc.; organized storytelling for young children will be entertaining, and will introduce them to the resources of the center's library and to reading for pleasure in general.

*Special Projects:*

a. *Research Project*—A number of summer workers will devote themselves to research on the economic and political life of Mississippi. Some of this work can be done outside the state, but much will need resources which can be found only in Mississippi. In addition, a number of people will be asked to live in white communities to survey attitudes and record reactions to summer happenings.

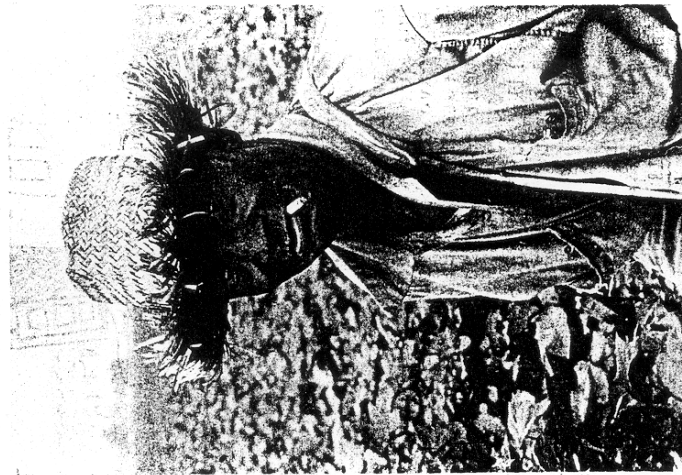
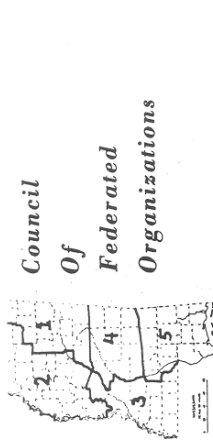
b. *Legal Projects*—A team of lawyers and at least 100 law students are expected to come to Mississippi to launch a massive legal offensive against the official tyranny of the State of Mississippi. Law students will be dispersed to projects around the State to serve as legal advisers to voter registration workers and to local people. Others will be concentrated in key areas where they will engage in legal research and begin to prepare suits against the State and local officials and to challenge every law that deprives Negroes of the freedom.

c. White Communities—Until now there has been no systematic attempt by people interested in the elimination of hate and bigotry to work within the white communities of the Deep South. It is the intention of the Mississippi Summer Projects to do just that. In the past year, a significant number of Southern white students have been drawn into the movement. Using students from upper Southern states such as Tennessee, and occasionally native Mississippians, SNCC hopes to develop programs within Mississippi's white community. These programs will deal directly with the problems of the white people. While almost all Negroes in Mississippi are denied the right to vote, statistics clearly indicate that a majority of whites are excluded as well. In addition, poverty and illiteracy can be found in abundance among Mississippi whites. There is in fact a clear area for Southern white students to work in, for in many ways Mississippi has imprisoned her white people along with her blacks. This project will be pilot and experimental and the results are unpredictable. But the effort to organize and educate whites in the direction of democracy and decency can no longer be delayed.

d. The Theater Project—Sponsored by the Tougaloo Drama Department, this summer will also mark the beginning of a repertory theater in Jackson, Mississippi. The actors will be Negro Mississippians; the plays will dramatize the experience of the Negro in Mississippi and in America; the stage will be the churches, community centers and fields of rural Mississippi.

Using the theater as an instrument of education as well as a source of entertainment, a new area of protest will be opened.

# COFO FLYER: MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM SUMMER



## MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM SUMMER

### What Is COFO?

COFO is an organization made up of all the civil rights and local citizenship groups in Mississippi which decided they must work together to improve conditions in Mississippi.



### For more information:

Write to - COFO STATE OFFICE  
1017 Lynch Street  
Jackson, Mississippi

Or call - 352-9605

### Other offices near you:

CLARKSDALE - 213 4th Street phone - 624-2913	COLUMBUS - 1323 6th Ave. North phone - 328-8916
GREENWOOD - 708 Avenue N phone - 453-1282	HATTIESBURG - 507 Mobile Street phone - 584-7670
MERIDIAN - 2505 1/2 5th Street phone - 485-9286	

### What You Can Do:

This is your FREEDOM SUMMER. It will not work without your help.

COFO is asking you to:

- provide housing for the people who are coming to work here.
- look for buildings which can be used for Freedom Schools and Community Centers.
- get names of students who want to go to Freedom Schools.
- let us know when you have meetings or arrange meetings so we can come answer questions about the FREEDOM SUMMER.

Many people are coming here to work during our FREEDOM SUMMER. They want to learn about Mississippi. They feel that the problems here are the problems of people all over the country. Most of them will be college students, both Negro and white.

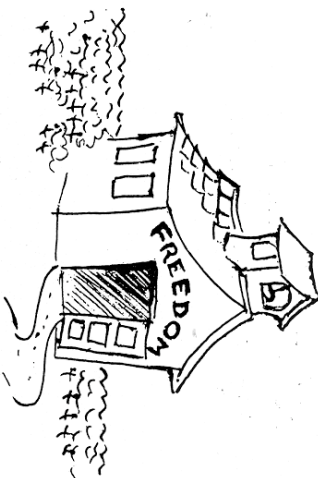
COFO is your organization. The things it is trying to do should be done by the state. The people who have been elected to run the state say that they do not have to do things for Negroes.

IT IS THE FAULT OF THE STATE that you cannot:

- find work
- read and write
- send your children to better schools.

If you work with COFO you will be working to get yourself the better conditions you deserve.

### Freedom Schools



FREEDOM SCHOOLS will be during the summer. They are schools where high school students will be able to talk about things they can't talk about in regular school. They will learn about civil rights.

There will be classes for students who:

1. have trouble with their lessons in regular school and want to do better,
2. like to read and want to learn more than they are taught in regular school.

There will be singing, dancing, sports, hikes and many other things for all students.

Some of the FREEDOM SCHOOLS will be for people who spend 6 weeks away from home to live at them.

ALL OF THE FREEDOM SCHOOLS WILL BE FREE.

### Voter Registration

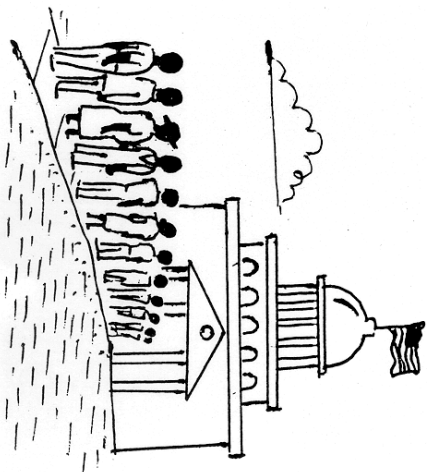
ARE YOU A REGISTERED VOTER?

If we were all voting then things would be better in Mississippi.

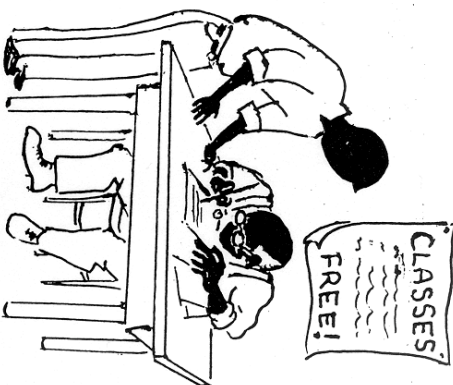
We would have:

- enough food
- more jobs
- better schools
- better houses
- paved sidewalks

People coming here this summer can work with you on VOTER REGISTRATION. They can knock on doors, teach the registration forms and drive people to the courthouse. They can help in any way you want them to.



### Community Centers



A COMMUNITY CENTER is a place where everyone can do many different things. It will be mostly for adults and will offer many chances for them to learn things to help them live better.

COMMUNITY CENTERS will have:

- job training programs
- classes for people who cannot read or write
- classes on child care
- health programs
- adult education and Negro history classes
- music, drama, and arts and crafts workshops

If you have small children, they will be taken care of while you enjoy the COMMUNITY CENTER.

EVERYTHING AT THE COMMUNITY CENTER WILL BE FREE.



COFO FLYER: MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Freedom Democratic Party

The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party is the political party for all the people in Mississippi--Negro and white--who are registered on the Freedom Registration books.

The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party is running Freedom Candidates for Congress and Senate.

Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer (C)  
Mr. James Houston (C)  
Rev. John Cameron (C)  
Mrs. Victoria Gray (S)

Why do we have the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party? Because the Mississippi Democratic Party is only for a few white people who have registered to vote under unfair voting laws.

The Mississippi Democratic Party runs people like:  
Jamie Whitten  
James Eastland  
Paul Johnson  
Ross Barnett  
for important offices.

The people in Mississippi and people all over the country are tired of having people like that represent Mississippi in the government.

So we have formed a new party in Mississippi.

The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party is for all people who want to be free.

Convention Challenge

We are going to send the people that were picked at our district and state meetings to the national democratic convention.

They're going to tell the people at the national meeting that they know what the people of Mississippi want.

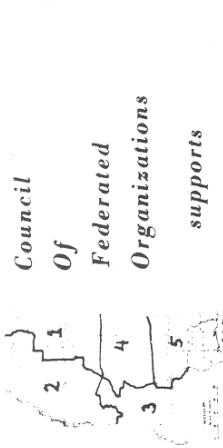
They are going to say that the people sent by the Mississippi Democratic Party do not know what the people of Mississippi want.

We want the people from the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party to be the official group from Mississippi at the national meeting.



If you want to ask questions call or write to:

Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party  
Headquarters  
1017 Lynch St.  
Jackson  
Mississippi  
phone: 352-9605



MISSISSIPPI  
FREEDOM  
DEMOCRATIC  
PARTY

### Democratic National Convention

The Democratic National Convention is a very big meeting in August.

It is a very important meeting because people in the Democratic Party choose the person they want to run for President of the United States.

People in the Democratic Party from all over the country come together to talk.

Mississippi sends a group of people to this national meeting.

This summer we are going to send a Freedom Group to the national meeting.

In order to choose the people that we want to go to the National meeting we will have to have four kinds of meetings here in Mississippi first.

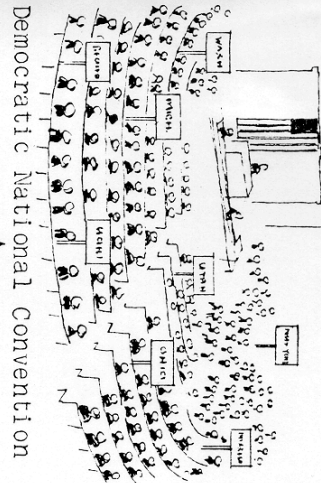
We will have:

#### PRECINCT MEETINGS

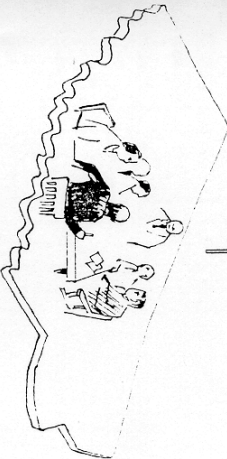
How many? As many precinct meetings as we can have--all over the state.

Who can come? Everyone who is registered on the Freedom Registration books.

What will they do? They will choose people to go to the county meetings.



Democratic National Convention



State Convention



District Conventions



County Conventions



Precinct Meetings

We will have:

#### COUNTY MEETINGS

How many? There will be 82 county meetings--one in each county in the state.

Who can come? The people who we picked at the precinct meeting.

What will they do? They will choose people to go to the district and state meetings.

We will have:

#### DISTRICT MEETINGS

How many? There will be five district meetings--one in each district in the state.

Who can come? The people who were picked at the county meetings.

What will they do? They will choose some people to go to the national meeting.

We will have:

#### A STATE MEETING

How many? There will be one state meeting.

Who can come? The same people who went to the district meetings.

What will they do? They will all get together and choose more people to go to the national meeting.



COFO FLYER: FREEDOM REGISTRATION

WHO CAN REGISTER:

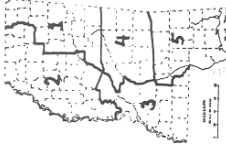
- anyone, who is:
- a citizen of the United States;
- 21 years old or over (or who will be 21 by the date of the FREEDOM VOTE)
- a citizen of Mississippi.



WHERE CAN YOU REGISTER:

- wherever a FREEDOM REGISTRATION is located;
- at FREEDOM REGISTRATION-mobiles;
- at the COUNCIL OF FEDERATED ORGANIZATIONS office nearest your home;
- by sending in a blank like the one on this folder.
- (look on the back for a list of COFO offices)

Council  
Of  
Federated  
Organizations



write: COFO STATE OFFICE  
1017 Lynch Street  
Jackson, Miss.  
or call: 352-9605

or contact the office near  
you:

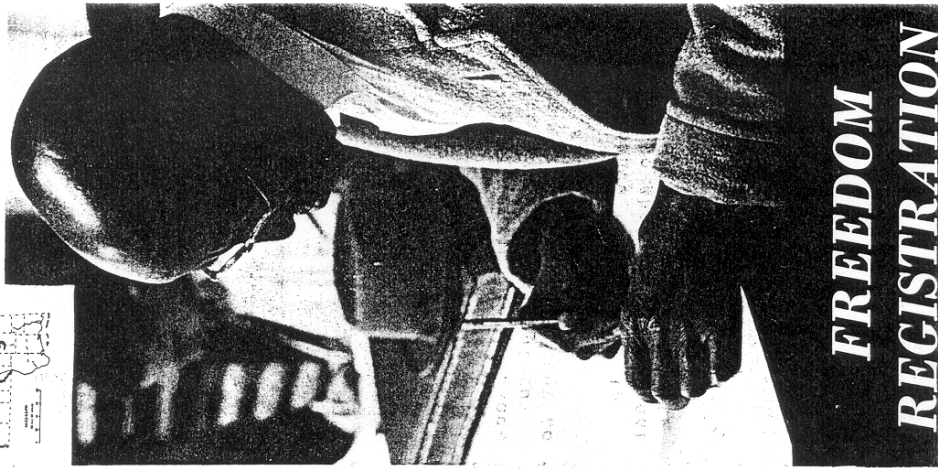
COFO  
1323 6th Avenue N.  
Columbus, Miss.  
328-8916

COFO  
213 4th Street  
Clarksdale, Miss.  
624-2913

COFO  
708 Avenue N  
Greenwood, Miss.  
453-1282

COFO  
507 Mobile Street  
Hattiesburg, Miss.  
584-7670

COFO  
2505 1/2 5th Street  
Meridian, Miss.  
485-9286



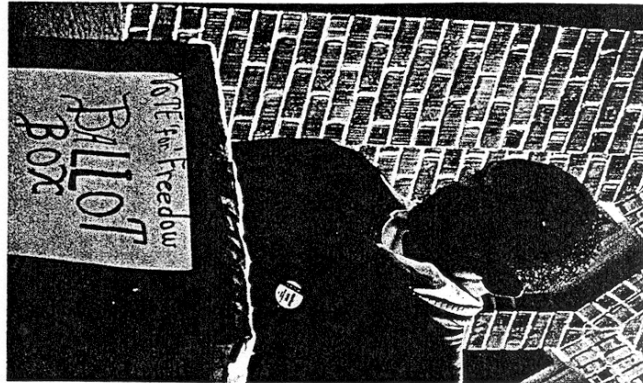
FREEDOM REGISTRATION is a chance for Negroes in Mississippi to show the world that they want to register and vote.

It is a chance for Negroes in the state to show the government that they will register to vote if they are given a chance.

Here is how it will work:

FREEDOM REGISTRARS will register qualified Negroes in every county;

PEOPLE WHO REGISTER in the FREEDOM REGISTRATION will be able to vote in the FREE-



ear along the dotted line and send the filled out form to the COFO office near you

## Freedom Registration Form

- (1) Write today's date: \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) Write your full name: \_\_\_\_\_
- (3) How old are you today: \_\_\_\_\_
- (4) Are you a United States citizen: \_\_\_\_\_
- (5) How long have you lived in Mississippi: \_\_\_\_\_
- (6) What county do you live in: \_\_\_\_\_
- (7) How long have you lived in that county: \_\_\_\_\_
- (8) What is your address now: \_\_\_\_\_
- (9) Are you a minister or the wife of a minister: \_\_\_\_\_

All of the statements above are true: \_\_\_\_\_  
(signature of applicant)

----- (do not write below this line) -----

State of Mississippi, County of: \_\_\_\_\_

Sworn to and subscribed before me by the above named \_\_\_\_\_

on this, the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 196\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**PROSPECTUS FOR A  
SUMMER FREEDOM SCHOOL PROGRAM IN MISSISSIPPI**

The Proposal (originally submitted by Charles Cobb, Dec 1963)

(Although this original proposal was submitted for the Mississippi Summer Project, it is relative to all Black Belt communities where the conditions are deplorably similar, and the prospectus is pertinent to the Freedom School programs that can operate all year round.)

It is, I think, just about universally recognized that Mississippi education, for black or white, is grossly inadequate in comparison with education around the country. Negro education in Mississippi is the most inadequate and inferior in the state. Mississippi's impoverished educational system is also burdened with virtually a complete absence of academic freedom, and students are forced to live in an environment that is geared to squash intellectual curiosity, and different thinking. University of Mississippi Professor James Silver, in a recent speech, talked of "social paralysis . . . where nonconformity is forbidden, where the white man is not free, where he does not dare express a deviating opinion without looking over his shoulder." This "social paralysis" is not limited to the white community, however. There are Negro students who have been thrown out of classes for asking about the freedom rides, or voting. Negro teachers have been fired for saying the wrong thing. The State of Mississippi destroys "smart niggers" and its classrooms remain intellectual waste lands.

In our work, we have several concerns oriented around Mississippi Negro students:

1. The need to get into the schools around the state and organize the students, with the possibility of a statewide coordinated student movement developing.
2. A student force to work with us in our efforts around the state.
3. The responsibility to fill an intellectual and creative vacuum in the lives of young Negro Mississippians, and to get them to articulate their own desires, demands and questions. More students need to stand up in classrooms around the state, and ask their teachers a real question.

As the summer program for Mississippi now shapes up, it seems as if hundreds of students as well as professional educators from some of the best universities and colleges in the North will be coming to Mississippi to lend themselves to the movement. These are some of the best minds in the country, and their academic value ought to be recognized, and taken advantage of.

I would like to propose summer Freedom Schools during the months of July and August, for tenth and eleventh-grade high school students, in order to:

1. supplement what they aren't learning in high schools around the state.
2. give them a broad intellectual and academic experience during the summer to bring back to fellow students in classrooms in the state, and
3. form the basis for statewide student action such as school boycotts, based on their increased awareness.

I emphasize tenth and eleventh-grade students, because of the need to be assured of having a working force that remains in the state high schools putting to use what it has learned.

The curriculum of this school would fall into several groupings:

1. supplementary education, such as basic grammar, reading, math, typing, history, etc.
- Some of the already-developed programmed educational materials might be used experimentally.

2. Cultural programs such as art and music appreciation, dance (both folk and modern), music (both folk and classical), drama, possibly creative writing workshops, for it is important that the art of effective communication through the written word be developed in Mississippi students.

3. Political and social science, relating their studies to their society. This should be a prominent part of the curriculum.

4. Literature

5. Film programs.

Special projects, such as a student newspaper, voicing student opinion, or the laying of plans for a statewide student conference, could play a vital role in the program. Special attention should be given to the development of a close student-teacher relationship. Four or five students to one teacher might be good, as it offers a chance of dialogue. The overall theme of the school would be the student as a force for social change in Mississippi.

If we are concerned with breaking the power structure, then we have to be concerned with building up our own institutions to replace the old, unjust, decadent ones which make up the existing power structure. Education in Mississippi is an institution which can be validly replaced, as much of the educational institutions in the state are not recognized around the country anyway.

### The Program

1. General Description: About 25 Freedom Schools are planned, of two varieties: day schools in about 20 to 25 towns (commitment still pending) and one or two boarding, or residential, schools on college campuses. Although the local communities can provide schools buildings and staff housing, all equipment, supplies and staff will have to come from the outside. Students should have an opportunity to work with the staff in other areas of the project, so that the additional experience will enrich their contribution to the Freedom School sessions.

2. Curriculum: On the weekend of March 21, and 22, the National Council of Churches sponsored a conference in N.Y.C. to develop a curriculum for the Freedom Schools. This conference brought together a group of well-qualified educators and many of the more perceptive minds presently engaged in studying our society. The conference participants worked from a preliminary outline which laid out the basic skills which the students need to improve, divided into four areas:

#### I. Leadership development

a. to give students the perspective of being in a long line of protest and pressure for social and economic justice (i.e. to teach Negro history and the history of the movement.)

b. to educate students in the general goals of the movement, give them wider perspectives (enlarged social objectives, nonviolence, etc.)

c. to train students in the specific organizational skills that they need to develop Southern Negro communities:

1. public speaking

2. handling of press and publicity

3. getting other people to work

4. organizing mass meetings and workshops, getting speakers, etc.

5. keeping financial records, affidavits, reports, etc.
  6. developing skill in dealing with people in the community
  7. canvassing
  8. duplicating techniques, typing, etc.
- d. to plan with each other further action of the student movement.

## II. Remedial Academic Program

- a. to improve comprehension in reading, fluency and expressiveness in writing.
- b. to improve mathematical skill (general arithmetic and basic algebra and geometry.)
- c. to fill the gaps in knowledge of basic history and sociology, especially American.
- d. to give a general picture of the American economic and political system.
- e. to introduce students to art, music and literature of various classical periods, emphasizing distinctive features of each style.
- f. to generate knowledge of and ability to use the scientific method.

## III. Contemporary Issues

- a. to give students more sophisticated views of some current issues.
- b. to introduce students to thinking of local difficulties in a context of national problems.
- c. to acquaint students with procedures of investigating a problem-rudimentary research.

## IV. Non-academic Curriculum

- a. to allow students to meet each other as completely as possible, in order to form a network of student leaders who know each other.
- b. to give students experience in organization and leadership
  1. field work—voter registration
  2. student publications
  3. student government
- c. to improve their ability to express themselves formally (through creative writing, drama, talent shows, semi-spontaneous discussions, etc.)

As a result of the curriculum conference, the curriculum planning took the following direction:

The aim of the Freedom School curriculum will be to challenge the student's curiosity about the world, introduce him to his particularly "Negro" cultural background, and teach him basic literacy skills in one integrated program. That is, the students will study problem areas in their world, such as the administration of justice, or the relation between state and federal authority. Each problem area will be built around a specific episode which is close to the experience of the students. The whole question of the court systems, and the place of law in our lives, with many relevant ramifications, can be dealt with in connection with the study of how one civil rights case went through the courts and was ultimately decided in favor of the defendant. The campaign of a Negro for Congress provides a basis for studying all the forces that which are against the Negro candidate, and which have worked against a Negro's even attempting to run for Congress. The challenge of the regular Mississippi delegation at the Democratic National Convention provides the starting-point for a study of the whole presidential nomination and the election procedure. These and other "case studies" which can be used to explore larger problem areas in the society will be offered to students. The Negro history outline, as presently planned, will be divided into

sections to be coordinated with the problem area presentation. In this context, students will be given practice activities to improve their skill with reading and writing. Writing press releases, leaflets, etc. for the political campaign is one example. Writing affidavits and reports of arrests, demonstrations, and trials, etc. which occur during the summer in their towns will be another. Using the telephone as a campaign tool will both help the political candidates and help students to improve their technique in speaking effectively in a somewhat formal situation. By using the multi-dimensional, integrated program, the curriculum can be more easily absorbed into the direct experience of the student, and thus overcome some of the academic problems of concentration and retention.

## ***CURRICULUM CONFERENCE SUBGROUP REPORT***

Report of a subgroup of the Leadership Development and Current Issues Committee at the Mississippi Summer Project Curriculum Conference. March 21-22

The group reporting dealt with political, economic, and social issues.

Approach: Problem-Solving through a series of case studies.

To develop in the future leaders of Mississippi an ability to deal with the problems of their state. Problem solving, as the committee views it, will be developed through a series of case studies dealing with the relevant political, economic, and social issues.

Advantages of approach:

1. Each problem or “case” will be related to the experiences and life situation of the students in Mississippi. It was felt that the academic disciplines of economics, politics, etc. could be best presented in the form that they present themselves in one’s life. For example, economics can be presented not as a graph but rather in the form of a loan not made or a job lost to a machine.

2. We will be able to enact new educational values by practicing more creative methods which will stimulate latent talents and interests that have been submerged too long. It is felt that one of the things which can be accomplished in such a short period of time is a “whetting of appetites” for further reading and educational experiences.

3. This approach allows for acquainting the participants with an awareness of the forces at work in our society and at the same time drawing on the experiences of the students and teachers involved. It demands very active participation from those who are to be introduced to new concepts. Most important, it seeks to draw on new kinds of creative abilities which are unfortunately not valued and remain untapped by the standard and presently accepted methods of teaching. These methods rely heavily upon tests and other methods of evaluation which are geared to particular cultural background.

4. The case study approach compensates for the obvious lack of training and standard cultural values of many of the teachers by focusing on those being taught and the method of teaching rather than the teacher himself.

5. We feel that such a curriculum will result in a creative experience for both the students and the teachers. It is hoped that both will come away with a new awareness of themselves and the movement. Perhaps, the children will be able to develop a new way of thinking and be awoken to their powers of analytic reasoning. In short we feel that the Freedom Schools can accomplish the vital task of causing high school youth in Mississippi to QUESTION.

6. The approach is not geared to a particular educational level but can be used successfully with any group since what happens in the classroom situation will be determined by the classes’ participation.

Preliminary working plan:

1. Fourteen “case-studies” or problems will be farmed out to various interested individuals to be researched.

2. Such research will require more imagination than diligence since we are not so interested in quantity of facts but concerned mainly with connections and associations which will be able to cross-cut the political, economic, and social elements of a given problem. We hope that the creativity of the class sessions will be mirrored by the creativity of the research as the students associate and pull incidents from their own experiences which are called to mind by the discussions which in turn, are centred around the case studies.

3. Perhaps the most imaginative part of the researchers work will be required as he devises audio and visual techniques for illustrating otherwise meaningless and unrelated facts. He will try to remember photographs and pictures, tapes and records, newspaper articles, movies, plays, songs and many more pertinent materials which are not usually thought of as educational tools.

Topics: The following will be a description of the cases with some suggestions as to the directions of the topics. These directions are only initial suggestions for it will be the task of the researcher to thoroughly work out all the implications of a given problem.

#### 1. Issue: Jamie Whitten and the Tractors

Description: This involves a decision by Congressman Jamie Whitten of Mississippi to introduce a tractor training program into an area of the state. The program would have relied upon Negro laborers but since the political stakes were very high, the situation has become extremely involved.

Ramifications: Automation—Mrs. Hamer’s campaign (She is a Negro citizen of Miss. who is running against Mr. Whitten in the forthcoming congressional elections in the state)—political power and interest groups—intrastate politics—federal programs, their use and misuse.

Researcher: Robert Moses

#### 2. Issue: Mrs. Hamer’s Campaign

Ramifications: National politics—Political parties and the National Conventions—The Miss. Delegations—Voter registration and Freedom Registration—COFO:—its development and value; its relationship to power in politics—Mrs. Hamer’s platform.

Researchers: Work-study group, Dona Richards Moses, Mendy Samstein, Jesse Morris

#### 3. School Boycotts in Mississippi (Hattiesburg, Canton)

Ramifications: School boycotts in Northern cities—Techniques of the movement in the north i.e. rent strike—Chicago’s relationship to Miss.—Slum ghetto areas in the north i.e. how do the ghettos of Chicago compare with Miss.—evaluation of Miss. Schools and other segregated schools.

Materials: Textbooks covering the same topic can be compared (northern—southern): tapes are available from Haryou and Peggy and Noel Day in Boston.

Researcher: Rochelle Horowitz

#### 4. Hattiesburg Demonstrations with respect to Communications and Public Relations

Ramifications: Press Releases: how to write them, where to send them—comparison of northern and southern account of the same incident—freedom of the press north and south:

what are its powers and how does it operate—what is the need for ministers and students from the north—what are the effects of these northerners upon demonstrations and police action.

Researcher: Sandy Leigh

#### 5. How the Power Structure Works

Ramifications: Interlocking power—how the establishment gets established— sovereignty commission—corporate structure northern businesses and corporation in the south—the effect of northern sympathy demonstrations i.e. Wall St. Picket

Researcher: Jack Minnis (he has been doing research already in the area of corporate structure in the south, and should be able to choose an appropriate case study).

#### 6. John Hardy's Case

Ramifications: Appeals and the Court—legal precedents—Intervention and the power of the federal government

Researcher : Tim Jenkins

#### 7. Civil Rights Bill

Ramifications: Where do they originate, how do they get passed. Forces which produced the present bill—The effect of the bill for Mississippians if it is passed— comparison of speeches for the bill with speeches against the bill—What is the significance of the filibuster, a lobby, the cloture—What are the implications of Sen. Russell's Relocation Speech—What are the non-racial implications of the bill.

Researcher: Bill Higgs, Oscar Chase

#### 8. Evaluation of the Freedom Rides and Sit-ins

Ramifications: Why were the Freedom Rides a failure in Mississippi: federal intervention and the ICC ruling.—Were the freedom rides successful anywhere? — Legal Defense Fund's project—the sit-in—philosophy of the sit-in—could they work in Miss. Early history of techniques and objectives of SNCC—The significance of economic pressure

Researcher: Jane Stembridge

Materials: Records, Songs, pictures, personal accounts.

#### 9. New Laws in Mississippi

Ramifications: Evaluation—Origins—Comparison with laws of South Africa— description and comparison of conditions in South Africa—practicality of non-violence in South Africa—Sharpeville incident—emergent nations: an evaluation.

Researcher: Bayard Rustin, Al Lowenstein

#### 10. Hazard, Kentucky

Ramifications: The existence of poor whites—economic problems to all lower class people—Fayette County (Forman's participation) Miners interested in coming to the Delta—organized labor—the labor movement to be compared with the civil rights movement: the meaning of Freedom Songs and Union songs—Students Negro Youth Conference (see Freedomways)—Birmingham labor organization

Researcher: Michael Harrington, Miles Horton, Hamie Sinclair

11. News coverage of the racial incident such as Medgar Evers death or the Monroe “kissing case”

Ramifications: International implication of racial discrimination in this country by comparison of coverage of American and Foreign newspapers of the same incident— Adlai Stevenson’s speech and others who appeal to an end to racial discrimination on the grounds of concern for our image abroad—US failure to sign UN Genocide Pact (NY Times article)

Materials: Foreign and domestic newspapers, actual speeches, visiting foreigners

Researcher: Bobbi Yanci

12. Cassius Clay’s Attitude Towards the Movement

Ramifications: Nationalist movements: Garvey—Black Muslims—Implications of Brother Malcolm’s new move—criticism of philosophy of black nationalism— pragmatic value of black nationalism—conditions of black nationalism

Researcher:

13. Canton—Economic Boycott

Ramifications: Implicit economics—economics and power—dependency on whites—Mississippi financial situation—Delta Economy

Researchers: Jack Minnis and Jesse Morris

*[Editors’ Note: Although the Preliminary Working Plan mentions plans for fourteen case studies, only thirteen are described. However, another version of the report does describe fourteen case studies.]*



## ***OUTLINE FOR CASE STUDIES***

### **I. How the Power Structure works**

- A. Interlocking power—how the establishment gets established.  
Political power and interest groups (White Citizen's Councils) Enforcement and perpetuation of power—police, sovereignty commission, etc. (briefly)
- B. Economic Basis  
Corporate structure—Northern businesses and corporations in the South.  
Dependence on whites of poorer Negroes (Delta sharecroppers, school teachers, etc.)  
Mississippi financial situation—vulnerable point.
- C. Relationship with federal government  
Rel. is often favorable (e.g. Eastland's committee—influence of federal judiciary)  
Fed. power is frustrated if it does not act favorably (e.g. Jamie Whitten's tractor deal.)  
Business of federal program in general.  
Limits of such use of federal govt.
- D. Use of power to meet challenges (cf. South Africa and Nazi Germany)
  - Political: new state laws  
fight against the national civil rights bill  
freedom rides and sit-ins—use of police power
  - Informal, social pressure (local white terror tactics)  
McComb bus station  
murder of Medgar Evers  
shooting of Jimmy Travis, etc.
  - Economic Fayette County  
welfare  
mass reprisals in canton

### **II. Study of the provisions of the Civil Rights bill—in view of the above, what are the prospects for it? What will its effects be in Miss.?**

- Opposition to bill: intrastate politics—Wallace's "presidential campaign"  
Interest groups—Miss. Sovereignty Commission, Fundamental American Freedoms group.  
Opposition in Congress itself—role of public opinion on that

### **III. COFO Political Programs—for study of political system**

- A. COFO convention challenge—political parties, national conventions.  
Platform—cf. Democratic and COFO platforms.
- B. Freedom Registration and Freedom Days—role and meaning of voting. Power of bloc voting.
- C. CR bill—whole legislative process—committee system, seniority system, party system, lobbies, rules (filibuster, cloture, etc.)
- D. Freedom candidates (Mrs. Hamer's campaign)—What politicians are like—how to tell a good one from a bad one (quotes from CR debate—excerpts from Miss.

Delegation speeches, Russell's relocation plan, etc.) cf. good congressmen and COFO Freedom Candidates.

#### IV John Hardy case—case for study of Court system

injustices in Miss. law enforcement  
federal versus state courts—aspect of federal intervention  
appellate processes  
importance of precedent  
What is legislation good for? What not?

#### V. Hazard, KY,—case for study of economic problems

Automation—two kinds (Hazard and the Miss. Delta)  
Poverty—poor whites (Hazard) poor Southern rural Negroes (Fayette and delta),  
Poor Northern urban dwellers (ghettoes). Chances of Coalition. Problem of other minorities in cities.  
Organized labor (Birmingham labor organization (?)) cf. CR and labor movements—historical parallels, songs, etc.

#### VI. Education

##### A. Schools

School boycotts in Hattiesburg and Canton—segregated schools  
Northern schools boycotts—problems of Northern ghettoes, de facto segregation, etc. Chicago's relationship to Miss.—comparison  
Evaluation of Mississippi schools—kid's own textbooks, example of Steptoe's son (?)

##### B. Mass media—news coverage of the movement

Publicity skills—how bias works (Local and national press coverage of local demonstrations)  
Press releases—how to write, where to release  
Freedom of the Press, north and south  
Power of the Press. Importance of ministers and students from North  
International implications of racial discrimination—Monroe “kissing case”, Medgar Evers.

#### VII. Opposition to the Power structure—Movement stuff

**MEMORANDUM TO FREEDOM SCHOOL TEACHERS**Memorandum

COFO  
1017 Lynch St  
Jackson, Miss.  
May5

To: MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM SCHOOL TEACHERS

FROM: Miss. Summer Project Staff

RE: SUBJECT: Overview of the Freedom Schools

The purpose of the Freedom schools is to provide an educational experience for students which will make it possible for them to challenge the myths of our society, to perceive more clearly its realities, and to find alternatives, and ultimately, new directions for action.

Just what forms this educational experience will take will vary from school to school and from teacher to teacher. We will not be able to provide all the facilities, materials and personnel we would like. This is a fact of our whole operation, and we are used to it. But we hope the curriculum will be flexible enough to overcome them.

The Freedom Schools will consist of from 5 to 15 teachers and 25 to 50 students. It does not now appear that we will be able to secure buildings for residential schools, so you will be working in day churches, store fronts, homes, etc.

The kinds of activities you will be developing will fall into three general areas: 1) academic work, 2) recreation and cultural activities, 3) leadership development. It is our hope that these three will be integrated into one learning experience, rather than being the kind of fragmented learning and living that characterizes much of contemporary education. How this integration can occur will be suggested by the materials we will be sending you and by the orientation period.

Since the students' academic experiences should relate directly to their real life in Mississippi, and since learning that involved real life experiences is, we think, most meaningful, we hope that the students will be involved in the political life of the communities. As the day's schedule below indicates, the students will work in various kinds of political activity in the evenings. The way students can participate in local voter registration should be worked out by the teachers and local COFO voter registration staff at a meeting before the opening of school. The teachers will be free to participate in these activities with the students, although you may need the time to prepare lessons, etc., and thus will want the local staff to supervise the students' canvassing, etc. It may also be the case that on some evenings the teachers or students will plan a special event and thus the students will not do political work that night. Or it may happen that the need for canvassing for a special event will cause local staff to ask for part of the students' day for this purpose. It is important that voter registration staff and teachers stay in close touch with each other so these things can be worked out. An average day's schedule might look like this: Early morning (7-9): Concentrated individual work on areas of the students' particular interest or need. Morning (9-12 or 1): Academic curriculum. Afternoon (2-4 or 5): Non-academic curriculum (recreation, cultural activities and some tutoring.) You will have to bear in mind that it is too hot in the afternoon for much concentrated work. Evening (7-9 or so): Work with voter registration activities, or special events (like a visiting folk singer) on evenings when no political work is needed.

The development of a weekly schedule and a daily lesson plan will be left to the teachers and students of the school. All teachers will be at their school's site at least a week before the schools

open July 7. This week should be used primarily for planning by the teaching group, as well as recruiting students and making community contacts. We will try to balance the schools' personnel so that various skills will be represented by different members of the teaching team.

The fact that you will do the actual development of a plan for each day means that you will have to be creative, resourceful and flexible. To aid you in your task, we will be supplying you with the following material, either in the mail or at orientation:

1. Curriculum Guide for Freedom Schools, by Noel Day. This document will be your basic teaching material. It contains six units of study centered around values and social change. Each unit contains suggested content materials and teaching methods. It will be possible for you to center some of the writing and reading teaching around the subject matter of the units, and discussion will help students grow in public speaking ability.

2. Case studies are being prepared by various people. Some of these will relate directly to the curriculum suggested by the Curriculum Guide, some can be used as supplementary material. The Case Study Outline will explain how to use these studies of various problems related to civil rights and political change.

3. Papers on the teaching of science, math and remedial reading and writing (also short papers on teaching arts and crafts, dramatics, etc.)

Science will not relate directly to the subject matter of the curriculum guide, but it is important that students receive both a feeling for what real science is (which they do not receive in school) and tutorial help in specific scientific areas of study if they show interest. Any teacher who know this area should come prepared to do some special work with a few students and to handle a class session or two on a general "Wonders of Science" theme. The paper you will receive will give you further ideas.

Math is an area of real difficulty for many students. Try to secure 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> (and earlier) math texts for use in tutoring. It will be difficult to develop class sessions around this subject, since students' abilities will vary greatly. The paper on teaching this subject will help you see an approach for a classroom situation.

Remedial reading and writing work will be needed by nearly all students. Reading aloud is suggested in the Curriculum Guide as are some theme topics. Students should be encouraged and guided in doing outside reading. Writing should be discussed with students individually with tutorial help directed toward writing improvement.

4. A paper on Leadership Development by Charlie Cobb will contain suggestions of the kinds of skills students should develop and suggest how theses can be integrated into daily activities.

5. A paper suggesting recreational and cultural activities for students will be available.

IT IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL THAT YOU STUDY THESE MATERIALS CAREFULLY AND BRING THEM SOUTH WITH YOU. THEY WILL BE YOUR GUIDE FOR THE SUMMER. YOUR TIME HERE IS LIMITED AND YOU MUST PREPARE AHEAD OF TIME AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. We will NOT be able to replace curriculum materials if you fail to bring them with you.

We are glad you will be with the Mississippi movement and hope that you share our excitement about the possibilities that the summer holds for real growth for you and Mississippi's young people.

[Editors' Note: 'Curriculum Guide for Freedom Schools' became the 'Citizenship Curriculum, Units I to VI']

## **OVERVIEW OF THE FREEDOM SCHOOLS—II**

COFO

1017 Lynch – Jackson, Miss.

The purpose of the Freedom Schools is to create an educational experience for students which will make it possible for them to challenge the myths of our society, to perceive more clearly its realities, and to find alternatives—ultimately new directions for action.

The Freedom Schools will consist of from 5 to 15 teachers and 35 to 50 students. They will be informal day schools, meeting in churches, store fronts, homes, etc. They will avoid the “academic” classroom atmosphere which characterizes their regular schools, but the Freedom Schools will present an intensive curriculum designed to meet several different needs:

I. An academic curriculum which will, insofar as possible in 6 short weeks, sharpen the students’ abilities to read, write, work mathematical problems, etc., but will concentrate more on stimulating a student’s interest in learning, finding his special abilities, so that when he returns to the state schools in the fall he can take maximum advantage of the public education which is offered to him.

II. The Citizenship curriculum which will concentrate on a study of the social institutions which affect the students, and the background of the social system which has produced us all at this time. The various sections will be: the Negro in Mississippi, the Negro in the North, Myths about the Negro, the Power Structure, the Poor Negro and the Poor White, Material Things versus Soul Things, and the Movement. In these sections, the students will be encouraged to form opinions about the various social phenomena which touch him, to learn about his own particular heritage as a Negro, and to explore possible avenues for his future. Special attention at the end of the unit will be devoted to the civil rights Movement—the historical development to this point, the philosophical assumptions underlying pressure for social change, and the issues which are currently before the civil rights Movement.

III. Recreational and cultural curriculum, which will be a large part of the day will try to provide the students with relaxation from their more intensive studies and also an opportunity to express themselves in new ways. The program will include dancing and sports, arts and crafts, dramatics, music, etc.

The schools will run for six weeks, with a short break in the middle for orderly staff turnover and some student changes. The school day will concentrate on the morning and afternoon; in the evening the students will be free, and will be encouraged to join the local COFO project, helping with the Freedom Registration, voter registration, the precinct meetings, etc. The Freedom School teachers, too, will participate in these programs as far as their academic responsibilities allow them to. The Freedom School teachers and the COFO voter registrations workers should meet to plan together the most useful participation of the Freedom School students, so that the total program will contribute both intensive intellectual development and practical experience to make them better potential leaders of the community.



*“Staughton Lynd lectures to Freedom School teachers”*

### ***NOTES ON TEACHING IN MISSISSIPPI***

FREEDOM SCHOOLS

COFO 1017 Lynch St., Jackson, Mississippi

#### **INTRODUCTION TO THE SUMMER—Jane Stembridge**

*This is the situation:* You will be teaching young people who have lived in Mississippi all their lives. That means that they have been deprived of decent education, from the first grade through high school. It means that they have been denied free expression and free thought. Most of all—it means that they have been denied the right to question.

The purpose of the Freedom Schools is to help them begin to question.

*What will they be like?* They will all be different—but they will have in common the scars of the system. Some will be cynical. Some will be distrustful. All of them will have a serious lack of preparation both with regard to academic subjects and contemporary issues—but all of them will have knowledge far beyond their years. This knowledge is the knowledge of how to survive in a society that is out to destroy you . . . and the knowledge of the extent of evil in the world.

Because these young people possess such knowledge, they will be ahead of you in many ways. But this knowledge is purely negative; it is only *half* of the picture and, so far as the Negro is concerned, it is the first half. It has, in a sense, already been lived through. The old institutions are crumbling and there is great reason to hope for the first time. You will help them to see there is hope and inspire them to go after it.

*What will they demand of you?* They will demand that you be honest. Honesty is an attitude toward life which is communicated by everything you do. Since you, too, will be in a learning situation—honesty means that you will *ask* questions as well as answer them. It means that if you

don't know something you will say so. It means that you will not "act" a part in the attempt to compensate for all they've endured in Mississippi. You can't compensate for that, and they don't want you to try. It would not be *real*, and the greatest contribution that you can make to them is to be real.

Remember this: These young people have been taught by the system not to trust. You have to be trust-worthy. It's that simple. Secondly, there is very little if anything that you can teach them about prejudice and segregation. They know. What you can and must do is help them develop ideas and associations and tools with which they can do something *about* segregation and prejudice.

How? We can say that the key to your teaching will be honesty and creativity. We can prepare materials for you and suggest teaching methods. Beyond that, it is your classroom. We will be happy to assist whenever we can.

How? You will discover the way—because that is why you have come.

#### THIS IS THE SITUATION—Charlie Cobb

Repression is the law; oppression, a way of life—regimented by the judicial and executive branches of the state government, rigidly enforced by state police machinery, with veering from the path of "our way of life" not tolerated at all. Here, an idea of your own is a subversion that must be squelched; for each bit of intellectual initiative represents the threat of a probe into the why of denial. Learning here means only learning to stay in your place. Your place is to be satisfied—a "good nigger."

They have learned the learning necessary for immediate survival: that silence is safest, so volunteer nothing; that the teacher is the state, and tell them only what they want to hear; that the law and learning are white man's law and learning.

There is hope and there is dissatisfaction—feebly articulated—both born out of the desperation of needed alternatives not given. This is the generation that has silently made the vow of no more raped mothers—no more castrated fathers; that looks for an alternative to a lifetime of bent, burnt and broken backs, minds, and souls. Where creativity must be molded from the rhythm of a muttered "white son-of-a-bitch"; from the roar of hunger-bloated belly; and from the stench of rain and mud washed shacks.

There is the waiting, not to be taught, but to reach out and meet and join together, and to change. The tiredness of being told it must be, 'cause that's white folks' business, must be met with the insistence that it's their business. They know that anyway. It's because their parents didn't make it their business that they're being so systematically destroyed. What they must see is the link between a rotting shack and a rotting America.

#### PROBLEMS OF FREEDOM SCHOOL TEACHING—Mendy Samstein

The Freedom Schools will not operate out of schoolhouses. There will rarely be classrooms, certainly no bells, and blackboards only if they can be scrounged. Freedom Schools in Mississippi will be a low-cost operation since funds will be very limited. Furthermore, the community will have little to offer in the way of resources. In many places, particularly in rural towns, there are no really suitable facilities available either in the white or in the Negro communities. As a result, most Freedom Schools will have to be held in church basements, homes, back yards, etc.

In some towns in the state, the students are waiting with great excitement in anticipation of the Freedom Schools. In other areas, however, special interest will have to be created—the teachers themselves will have to recruit students before the Freedom Schools begin. In these places, you will find that you are almost the first civil rights worker to be there, and if you are white, you will almost certainly be the first white civil rights workers to come to the town to stay. You will need to deal with the problem of your novelty as well as with the educational challenge.

There will be some advantages which will, we hope, overcome some of the material shortcomings. If you go to a town where COFO has had an active project for some time, you will probably be greeted warmly because there is a great deal of support for the Freedom School program. However, even if you go to a relatively new place, you can count on some things: In no community will there be a Freedom School unless the people of that community have expressed a desire for one, have shown their support by finding housing for staff at low cost (typically \$10 a week for room and board), and have scouted out a place for a Freedom School.

The greatest advantage, however, will be the students and, we hope, your approach. In the final analysis, the effectiveness of the Freedom Schools this summer will depend upon the resourcefulness and honesty of the individual teachers—on their ability to relate sympathetically to the students, to discover their needs, and to create an exciting “learning” atmosphere. The informal surroundings, the lack of formal “school” trappings, will probably benefit the creation of this atmosphere more than the shortage of expensive equipment will discourage it. Attendance will not be required, so if the teacher is to have regular attendance from his students, he must offer them a program which continues to attract; this means that he must be a human and interesting person.

It is important to recognize that these communities are in the process of rapid social change and our Freedom School program, along with the rest of the summer activities, will be in the middle of this ferment. The students will be involved in a number of political activities which will be relatively new in Negro communities in Mississippi. They will be encouraging people to register to vote, organizing political rallies, campaigning for Negro candidates for high public offices, and preparing to challenge the Mississippi Democratic Party. These activities will be a large part of the experience which the students will bring to your classes. In most instances, we believe that this will help the Freedom School program and you should capitalize on these experiences by relating it to classroom work. You will need to know something about these experiences, so you will have the opportunity to share them by canvassing, campaigning, distributing leaflets, etc., with the students. You will define your role more precisely when you arrive by consulting with COFO voter registration people in the area. It will probably be important to the students that you show willingness to work with them but you will have to balance this against your own need to prepare for classes, recreation and tutoring.

In some communities, however, the situation may go beyond this. The community may embark upon more direct kinds of protest, resulting in mass demonstrations, jail, and any number of eventualities. We have no specific suggestions to make if this situation arises. You will have to play it by ear. We can only say that if you are teaching in a Freedom School in Mississippi, you *must* keep a sensitive ear to the ground so that if this should happen, you will be aware of what is happening in the community. You will have to decide if a continuing educational program is possible, and, if it is not, what modification of the program you can arrange to make this summer as constructive a period for the community as possible.



REMARKS TO THE FREEDOM SCHOOL TEACHERS ABOUT METHOD—Noel Day  
TEACHING TECHNIQUES AND METHOD: The curriculum is flexible enough to provide for the use of a wide range of methods in transmitting the material. The basic suggested method is discussion (both as a class and in small groups) because of the opportunities this method provides for:

1. Encouraging expression.
2. Exposing feelings (bringing them into the open where they may be dealt with productively).
3. Permitting the participation of students on various levels.
4. Developing group loyalties and responsibility.
5. Permitting the sharing of strengths and weaknesses of individual group members.

However, presentation lectures, reading aloud (by students), the use of drama, art, and singing can be utilized in many sections of the curriculum. We recommend, however, that discussion be used as a follow up in each instance in order to make certain that the material has been learned.

#### TEACHING HINTS:

1. Material should be related whenever possible to the experience of students.
2. No expression of feelings (hostility, aggression, submission, etc.) should ever be passed over, no matter how uncomfortable the subject or the situation is. Both the students and the teacher can learn something about themselves and each other if it is dealt with honestly and with compassion.
3. The classroom atmosphere should not be formal (it is not a public school). Ways of accomplishing an informal atmosphere might be arrangement of seats in a circle, discussions with individuals or small groups before and after sessions, use of first names between teachers and students, shared field-work experiences, letting students lead occasionally, etc.
4. Prepare ahead of time for each session.
5. When using visual materials, make certain they are easily visible to all students and large enough to be seen. (When smaller materials must be used, pass them around after pointing out significant details.)
6. Let students help develop visual materials wherever possible (perhaps after class for the next session).
7. At the end of each session, summarize what has been covered and indicate briefly what will be done in the next session.
8. At the beginning of each session, summarize the material that was covered the day before (or ask a student to do it).
9. Keep language simple.
10. Don't be too critical at first; hold criticism until a sound rapport has been established. Praise accomplishments wherever possible.
11. Give individual help to small groups, or when students are reading aloud or drawing.
12. A limit of one hour (an hour and a half at most) is probably desirable for any one session. This limit can be extended, however, by changing activities and methods within a session.

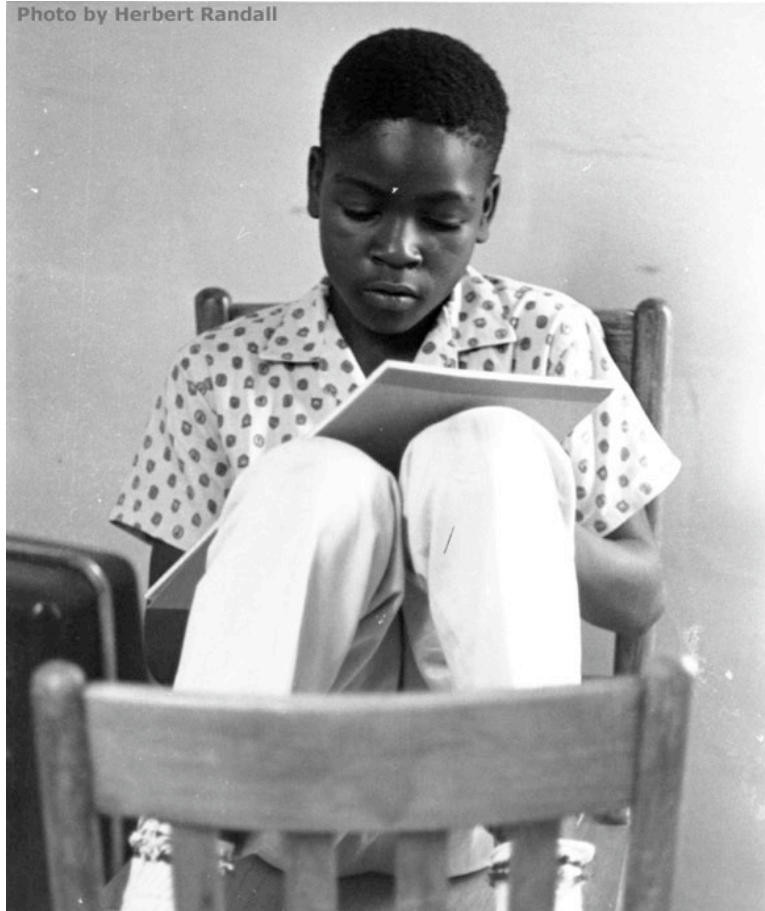
#### DISCUSSION-LEADING TECHNIQUES

1. The leader must always be aware of his role: that he is, on the one hand, only the leader and not the dominant participant, and, on the other hand, that he is in fact the leader and responsible for providing direction and keeping the discussion going.

2. The use of questions is probably the best way to start and keep a discussion going. The questions should be:
  - a. simple and clearly phrased
  - b. in language understood by the discussants.
  - c. not answerable by “yes” or “no”.
3. The best types of questions fall into three categories:
  - a. Those investigating emotional response (e.g., how did you feel when? Or how would you feel if?)
  - b. Those investigating motivation (e.g., why did you feel that way? Why would you do that? Why do you think that?, etc.)
  - c. Those in response to others’ reactions (e.g., what do you think about what Bob said?)
4. The physical arrangements can affect the quality of discussion. The best arrangement has everyone in view of everyone else. The leader then stands to introduce a visual aid so that it is visible to all.
5. The leader should be careful to be adroit at keeping the discussion on the track.
6. The leader should occasionally summarize what has been said:
  - a. to provide continued direction.
  - b. to provide smooth transitions from one major topic to another.
  - c. to emphasize important points (and by exclusion to de-emphasize irrelevant points).
  - d. to re-stimulate the group if discussion has lagged.
7. The leader should encourage participation by everyone. Some techniques for this are:
  - a. direct question to silent participants (do not press if they continue to be reticent).
  - b. use of small groups with the usually silent members as reporters.
  - c. praise when the usually silent members participate.
  - d. relating topics to their personal interests and experiences.
  - e. re-stating inarticulate statements for them (e.g., Do you mean? etc.)
8. The leader should be sensitive to lagging interests and overextended attention spans. (The form of activity can be changed after a brief summary of the discussion to that point. A change of activity form is often restful—particularly when it requires some physical movement, such as breaking one large group into smaller groups scattered throughout the room, or putting review in the form of a TV quiz game, or asking that a particular point be dramatized, or a picture drawn, etc.)
9. The leader should have all resource materials, visual aids, etc., at hand.
10. The leader should always leave time for the students to ask him questions.
11. The leader should be willing to share his experiences and feelings, too.
12. The leader should not insist that words be pronounced in any particular way. Respect regional variations (e.g., Southern pronunciation of “bomb” is typically “bum”). The basic point is communication—if it gets the idea across it is good.
13. The leader should not be critical—particularly at the start. For many of the students, **JUST BEING ABLE TO VERBALIZE IN THIS SITUATION IS PROGRESS** that can easily be inhibited by a disapproving remark or facial expression.
14. Learn the students’ slang. It can often be used to ease tensions or to express tones of feeling and certain meanings more succinctly than more academic language.
15. Protect students from each other’s verbal attacks and downgrading (ranking, etc.)—particularly the slower or less articulate students.

USING DRAMA: Probably the best way of using the dramatic method is the extemporaneous approach. In this approach, learning lines in a formal way is avoided. A story is told, or a “let us suppose that” or a “Pretend that...” situation is structured, and then parts assigned. The actors are encouraged to use their own language to interpret the story or situation and some participants are assigned to act the part of nonhuman objects as well (e.g., trees, a table, a mirror, the wind, the sun, etc.). Each actor is asked to demonstrate how he thinks the character he is portraying looks, what expression, what kind of voice, how he walks, what body posture, etc. As soon as each actor has determined the characteristics of his part, the story outlined is reviewed again, and then dramatized. This method can permit the expression of a wide range of feelings by the students, involve their total selves, stimulate creativity, provide the teacher with insights about the students, and, at the same time get across the content material.

USING SPECIAL RESOURCE PEOPLE: there will be many talented people in Mississippi this summer. Some of them will be attached to projects in voter registration, community centers and freedom schools (you). There will be other professional people who will not be staying long enough to follow one project through from beginning to end, but they are eager to make what contribution they can. Included in this category are physicians, attorneys, ministers, and, most notably, entertainers. In the group of entertainers will be some very eminent folk singers and comedians. (Folk singers are being recruited on a formal basis. Lawyers are too. Physicians and ministers may or may not be attached to specific programs.) Whatever their formal status, these people will represent a great advantage to your program. You, however will have to make the best use of them. You should try to make their contribution as great, and as well-coordinated with the regular program, as you and they can make it. This will require creative thinking and prior planning for both guests and the freedom school personnel.



*“Freedom School student writing”*

### ***NON-MATERIAL TEACHING SUGGESTIONS***

(but plenty of paper and pencils) FOR FREEDOM SCHOOLS (excerpt)

My preference is for de-emphasizing the teaching of reading (spelling and grammar) as a separate skill unless a student, of his own volition, specially requests it. In general, a high school student will probably learn more from speaking, reading, and writing about his own thoughts or a particular subject he himself is interested in. Two students working together can often teach and learn more from each other than you can teach either of them separately. But you should always be available to answer questions (if you can) or act as umpire if needed. Specifically, a student or students might be asked to do any of the following:

1. Write up reactions to, or a summary of, a class discussion.
2. Report to the class on something he, or they, have studied on their own or worked on specially with you or a specialist (e.g. in math, science, art or politics).
3. teach games or reading, or anything needed, to younger children in a Community Center and report this in detail for the class.
4. Report for, and edit, a newspaper to exchange with other Freedom Schools.
5. Report or exchange information in any form on any subject that may occur to you or them (e.g. their work on Voter Reg.)

You will want to fit the form of the presentation to the particular student—a written report for him to read to the class, or which you or another student might read to the class, or an oral report to the class, with or without demonstration (or a scientific experiment, an artistic creation or anything else.)

I would suggest not correcting grammar or spelling for the first few days unless a student asks you to (and means it). Students will probably criticize each other on these mechanics, and this is better. You will have to judge which students need to be protected, by you, from too much fellow-student criticism too soon.

Some students will not be able to bring themselves to read aloud or speak before the class. You should judge when, if ever, it is time to push them a little to make a try at it. Try never to embarrass a student before his fellows.

Some students will be unable to express their thoughts adequately in writing if you insist upon proper spelling. Others will be uncomfortable if you do not enable them to spell everything properly as they write it down. For these students, you should be ever-present to furnish them with the words they need. Such a student might have a notebook in which he could copy and keep track of any word you furnished for him. (You could write it on a slip of paper as he asked for it.) Generally speaking, I would not say “Go look it up in the dictionary” if a student asks how to spell a word. (Try looking up a word like colossal? calosel? collasol? if you don’t know its spelling, and you’ll see what I mean.)

We are really more concerned with content and clarity of thought (in the student’s own meaningful language) than with grammar and spelling. I think this point has a particular importance in areas where the public school teachers have been hesitant to deal in ideas—because then there is a tendency for the teacher to fall back on stressing mechanics. (By the same token, if you are fresh from the halls of ivy, watch to keep yourself from falling back on jargon or vague, abstract terms when the ideas get hot or you’re not sure exactly what you want to say.)

If you feel that a particular student is free enough in expressing his ideas that you can afford to push him in the areas of spelling and grammar, the newspaper might be a good place for him to practice it. I think the newspaper would be one place where you can require precision in spelling and grammar, and perhaps (?) a more formal style of writing. Students who were not up to this could write newspaper stories which could be edited by other students.

I think the rule of thumb for this whole area of written (and oral) expression might be: Help your student to use his language for clear communication, but hesitate to change matters of style—unless it’s your student who’s working on style.

#### READING MATERIALS AT VARIOUS LEVELS:

If you do not have reading material which matches your (each) student—and content is at least as important as reading level—I would suggest your having the students write their own material. Your labor is likely to bear more fruit if they, rather than you, do the writing. If you want to study a difficult novel, read it aloud to them, or have a student who enjoys reading aloud and does it well do part of the reading. As you read, encourage interruptions for questions and discussion. Then you can have a, some, or all students write summaries or critiques or whatever you want. Read then aloud in class (each his own, perhaps) and discuss content. If it turns out to be something great, you can have the students edit the material and perhaps exchange a volume with another freedom school. (It doesn’t have to be mimeographed, it could be a single handwritten and illustrated volume.)

For non-literary subjects, it is usually much better if you study the material in advance and tell it rather than reading it to the students. Then go on with the writing and discussion, as above, if you want to. Your telling, with your own comments and asides, is a thousand times more captivating to a student than reading the material aloud.

You can modify the above for math as well as history, science, etc. Students making up math problems for other students to solve will often make up more difficult ones than you or the book would have dared—and if the problem-maker has gotten too fancy, you can always pull the dirty trick of making him solve his own! (But do it friendly-like!) These things need to be done by the whole class. Two or three students might do them separately or together—and if it turned out well they might present the results to the class.

All of this working over and over on the same material (talk, write, read, discuss, etc.) may seem hard to you at first, but I think you will not find it a waste of time. One of the very important parts of the process of learning is to approach the same material from many angles and in many media. You may not (will not, I should say) get through the whole of the citizenship curriculum if you work this way, but you'll leave your students with something real to hang onto when you're gone.

**HOMEWORK:** I'm against it—unless a student asks for it. These kids may be working at home or at a job or on voter registration. What they can't do in school hours is probably better left undone. And your own time is better spent in preparing particular material for a particular student, or for all your students, than in correcting old, dead homework. The beauty of in school work is that you can work over it with a student as he goes along and guide him or support him so he won't make mistakes.

**TESTING:** I'm against it—even if the students ask for it!! Naturally, nothing can be a flat rule, but testing, generally, is at best, a waste of time. At worst it is likely to discourage the very student who needs most to be encouraged. It is rarely a teaching device. In a class of 30 children, a teacher may be forced to resort to testing to find out how the students are progressing. But why use a second-class crutch when you have two good legs? With only five students, you will be able to work closely enough with each, that you will be able to know where he stands and what the next steps should be. And you will know it with much more accuracy and detail than any written test can reveal.

#### **IN GENERAL:**

Try to give your students as much a feeling of power as you can—not the phony class-meeting type but power over materials, words, songs, thoughts. If you really let them choose what they want to learn, it will be a much more important lesson in freedom than the Civil Rights Bill or the Mississippi Power Structure. And your attitude of genuine respect for your students and their ideas will give them much more courage to stand up to a policeman, than any words you can say.

Cultivate this attitude of respect and real listening and honest answering right down to the bone. It's very hard to listen—practice it over the lunch table. But listen actively, not passively

If you ask a question, make it a real question, not an implied pressure or rebuke.

There is no need for fulsome praise if you can show real appreciation for each student at his level. Heavy praise may discourage someone else.

Don't do a lot of preparation on a subject until you find out what your students want to know. If you learn something special, you'll be burning to teach it and they may have to sit and politely listen the way they have to in regular school.

If possible, spend your time making the schoolroom full of the physical conditions for learning—reference books and materials in inviting and handy places—getting to know some of your students beforehand if possible so it won't be so hard to get things going the first day, perhaps finding out what some of your students have in mind to learn so you can begin thinking and preparing and scrounging materials and specialists, and don't forget the important constant dialogue with your fellow teachers and coordinators.

Teaching can be an exhausting job if it's properly done, so try yourself out on it before you volunteer for all sorts of other jobs in the evening. Many evenings you'll probably need to be preparing material for the next day or helping one of your students with something. Of course if voter registration is a big interest of your students, you will automatically be there with them, I guess, getting your life material ready for the next day.

Be frank and honest at all times, but remember that you are the adult and your students are your students. Don't impose your problems on them. It's your job to support them, and your satisfactions, and their respect for you, will come from that. You must be patient and reasonable and strong and good natured and sensitive and mature. The students don't have to be. If they will show you what really bothers them, you've achieved something, but what you must give in return is what will help them, not yourself.

ADDENDA: Another of the ways you can work over some of the material of the type on pp.1-2, above, is to act out parts of the material informally before writing about it but probably after some discussion.

As often as possible, provide an active learning situation where the students can do something and you will not have to do much talking.

Example: Instead of explaining Socratic method, let the class play the Socrates Game—

One student leaves the room and the others decide upon something they want to get him to say. When he returns to the room, they take turns asking questions and see how long it takes to get him to express the statement or point of view they are trying to elicit. (He should be fairly cooperative.)

#### SOME SIMPLE SPELLING CLUES:

. . . I hope you'll have a good dictionary in your classroom—to settle arguments between your students and to refer to generally. If a student picks you up on an exception or a mistake—let him prove it to you with the dictionary—and be glad. That particular spelling (or fact or whatever), he will remember—and in addition he will have begun to learn that the authorities (you, for the moment) are often wrong!

Despite all this stuff on spelling, let me remind us both that the more important things are the not-spelling ideas laid out on pp. 1-2.

If some or all of this has sounded like talking-down to you, please forgive me for not taking my own advice, and let that be a lesson to you!

Go Well,  
Ruth Emerson

*[Editors' Note: the complete document is in the Ellin Papers in the Digital Archive; see Preface.]*

***PROFILES OF TYPICAL FREEDOM SCHOOLS***

COFO,  
1017 Lynch St.  
Jackson, Mississippi

**I. Hattiesburg**

Hattiesburg, Mississippi is a town of around 30,000—which makes it one of the five or six largest cities in Mississippi. It is near the gulf coast cities which are the “moderate” part of the state, but Hattiesburg itself is a deep-dyed conservative town. It is Governor Paul B. (Stand Tall with Paul) Johnson’s hometown. It is the site of Mississippi Southern University, whose law school faculty has engineered the so-far successful defiance of Ross Barnett in the James Meredith case (also acts as consultants for the State of Miss. in other civil rights cases). Mississippi Southern also is the school where Clyde Kennard, a Negro, applied in the late 1950’s. He was subsequently sent to Parchman penitentiary on a flimsy burglary conspiracy charge, contracted cancer in prison and died. Mississippi Southern has since rejected the application of another Negro, John Frazier, five times. Hattiesburg is the seat of Forrest County. Despite its large (by Mississippi standards) university and a fairly firm economic base in commerce and manufacturing, Hattiesburg “feels” like a small, agrarian-oriented community.

Hattiesburg has had a long, tough history of civil rights activity, primarily centered on the denial of the right to vote. The Circuit Clerk of the County (registrar of voters), one Theron Lynd, has made himself the test case for all recalcitrant Mississippi registrars. As early as 1961, the Department of Justice instituted proceedings against him, charging discrimination against Negroes. After much litigation, the federal government won its case and Lynd was ordered to register 43 persons whose applications a U.S. District Judge had processed and found acceptable. Lynd consistently refused to obey these court orders, was convicted of civil contempt and STILL would not register the persons in question. The Department of Justice then instituted criminal contempt proceedings against him which are still pending. At this point, however, the civil rights groups moved independently. On January 22, designated Freedom Day in Hattiesburg, COFO people from all over the state, national civil rights leaders, but mostly the people of Hattiesburg, started a picket line around the Forrest County courthouse which, with some interruptions, is still going on. This picket line represented a breakthrough for civil rights demonstrations in Mississippi, because it was the first to last more than 10 minutes—the police did not arrest everybody. Later, after the State legislature passed a special statute outlawing picketing of public buildings, the picketers were arrested, but that passed, too, and the picketing has resumed.

The COFO project in Hattiesburg is one of the largest and most active in the state, with a high proportion of adult participation and leadership. The town is organized, with 100 block captains, 15 citizenship teachers, and uncountable canvassers, picketers and ministers from outside the state. Two candidates for national office (one for Congress and one for Senate) have come out of the movement in Hattiesburg. The atmosphere is enthusiastic and the people work very hard.

Because the project is so active, there is a lot of demand for the Freedom Schools, and the Hattiesburg people have, therefore planned a series of Freedom Schools. The facilities are presently planned for Sunday School rooms in churches around town and in surrounding counties. Project leaders in Hattiesburg are especially interested in supplementary classes for local adults and staff members in basic literacy and current issues. The project has found housing for 110



summer workers (all of which will not work in the city of Hattiesburg, however). The project has also laid hands on a movie projector and a tape recorder for the summer project. Since the community is able to support the program better than in other areas of the state, the needs are not proportionately as great, even though it is a large Freedom School project. The main needs are for equipment and transportation to outlying schools and schools in other counties. The total budget is for \$2,000 to pay for food, transportation, equipment, and inescapable expenses such as phone bills.

## II. Meridian

Meridian is a city of 50,000, the second largest in the state. It is the seat of Lauderdale county. It is in the eastern part of the state, near the Alabama border, and has a history of moderation on the racial issue. At the present time, the only Republican in the State Legislature is from Meridian. Registration is as easy as anywhere in the state, and there is an informal (and inactive) "biracial committee", which, if it qualifies, is the only one in the state.

Voter registration work in Meridian began in the summer of 1963 (for COFO staff people, that is), and by autumn, when Aaron Henry ran in the Freedom Vote for Governor campaign, there was a permanent staff of two people in the city. In January, 1964, Mike and Rita Schwerner, a married couple from New York City, started a community center. In Meridian's mild political climate, the community center there has functioned more smoothly than either of the two community centers which COFO has organized in tougher areas. The center has recreation programs for children and teenagers, a sewing class and citizenship classes. It also has a library of slightly over 10,000 volumes, and ambitious plans for expansion if more staff were available. The COFO staff in Meridian uses Meridian as a base for working six other adjoining counties.

The Freedom School planned for Meridian will have a fairly large facility, in contrast to most places in the state. The Baptist Seminary is a large, 3-story building with classroom capacity for 100 students and sleeping accommodations for staff up to about 20. Besides this, there is a ballpark available for recreation. The school has running water, blackboards and a telephone. The center has a movie projector and screen which it probably would lend. The library lends books to anyone for two-week periods. The question of rent has not been decided for the school. Even if there is no rent, however, we can count on a budget of around \$1300, for food for students, utilities, telephone and supplies.

## III. Holly Springs

Holly Springs is a small town, the seat of Marshall County. The Methodist Negro College, Rust College, is located in the town. It's a very attractive campus, and the students and faculty have been very active recently (since it's a church-operated school, one can expect somewhat more cooperation of Rust than the state schools). Holly Springs is currently acting as the clearinghouse for all our library books and Freedom School materials. There has been no permanently-based COFO project with a full-time staff worker in Holly Springs; all the action has been the work of the local people. The roots in this community are somewhat recent, reflecting the fact that in the Northern, hilly part of the state, intensive civil rights work is just beginning.

In Holly Springs there are two houses available for a total of 75 students (and housing for 15 teachers). The rent will be \$400, a major expense. The houses will go if we can't raise the rent money. Besides rent, the normal expenses and food will make the project cost about \$1,000.

## IV. Ruleville

Ruleville is a small Delta cotton town in Senator Eastland's home county (Sunflower County). The sheriff in Ruleville is the brother of the man believed to have killed little Emmett Till in 1954—a man with a great reputation in his own right for brutality toward Negroes. By any standard, Ruleville is a tough Delta Town. Its main attraction for us is that it is the home of Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party's candidate for Congress in the Second Congressional District. Mrs. Hamer's own history is typical of much of the harassment of Negroes in the Miss. Delta: When Mrs. Hamer tried to register to vote in 1962, she was fired from her job. She and her family were run off the plantation where they had worked for years. She persisted, and became one of the great leaders of the Mississippi movement, but in the meantime she was arrested, beaten, her home shot into, her husband fired.

Voter registration activity began in Ruleville in 1962. The project is well established in the community, even though the town is so small. Because it is an area of desperate poverty, even for the Delta, COFO has sponsored a food and clothing project in Ruleville for several months, with Mrs. Hamer and other local ladies in charge of the distribution.

For Freedom School project in Ruleville, the local people have found a house which can serve 40 students, and have housing for 8 teachers. For the rent, and a few necessary supplies, we estimate that this Freedom School needs \$200. Lunches for students would probably be another \$500, but this is a service which is needed in the area.

**MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM SCHOOLS:***New Houses of Liberty*

I asked for your churches, and you turned me down,  
But I'll do my work if I have to do it on the ground,  
You will not speak for fear of being heard,  
So you crawl in your shell and say, "Do not disturb,"  
You've protected yourself for another day.

But tomorrow surely will come,  
And your enemy will still be there with the rising sun,  
He'll be there tomorrow as all tomorrows in the past,  
And he'll follow you into the future if you let him pass.

—from a poem by Joyce Brown, 16  
Freedom School pupil in McComb, Mississippi

This poem was written by a 16-year old Negro girl in McComb, Mississippi. She and approximately 1,825 other Negroes—children, teen-agers and adults—are attending the 39 Freedom Schools of the Mississippi Summer Project, sponsored by the council of Federated Organizations (COFO), a statewide organization of local groups aided by field secretaries of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), CORE, NAACP, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

These students—going to "school" in churches, private homes, and backyards—are learning Negro history, civics, American history, arts and crafts, drama, music, English, arithmetic, algebra and chemistry. They are being taught by 250 Negro and white summer volunteers from 40 states in schools which have been set up in every Mississippi city or town of considerable size, as well as in rural counties where Negroes have been shot to death for attempting to register to vote.

Project coordinators state that the Freedom School program is an unqualified success. Rev. Thomas Wahman, a coordinator of religious activities at New York University, and a Freedom School coordinator, terms the project a "completely unexpected phenomenon." Despite the fear which prevails in most Negro communities throughout the state, "several are demanding that COFO come in and set up schools," says Wahman.

Ralph Featherstone, a 25-year old Negro speech teacher from Washington, D.C., is director of the McComb Freedom School. Featherstone explains that the opening of the school was delayed for two weeks after three civil rights workers disappeared in Philadelphia, Mississippi and advance scouts prepared the way in the dangerous Southwest area of Mississippi.

But Featherstone found the students ready and waiting. In fact, Featherstone says, "they'd heard about the school and they felt left out because we didn't arrive on time."

Now the registration in McComb is up to 105, with a daily attendance of 75. Many of the students are the younger brothers and sisters of the 110 high school students who walked out of school when four of their number were arrested on a sit-in charge at the Greyhound bus station in 1961.

“I think the Freedom School is inspiring the people to lend a hand in the fight,” Featherstone reports. “The older people are looking to the young people, and their courage is rubbing off. The school makes the kids feel they haven’t been forgotten. It makes them feel that at last something is coming down to help them. They feel the school is for them.”

The McComb school started in the backyard of the SNCC Freedom House a week after it was bombed. For one week, students conducted classes in the blistering heat only yards away from the spot where three explosions ripped away one wall. Now they are in a church.

The Hattiesburg Freedom School system (there are five) has the highest registration and the most varied curricula in the state. Some 575 young people and adults attend morning and evening classes in the usual academic subjects, plus music programs, discussion groups, slide exhibitions, and art classes. Three of the five schools are putting out a newspaper, and Mrs. Carolyn Reese, a Negro Detroit school teacher and administrator of the Hattiesburg Freedom Schools, reports that the other two will begin putting theirs out soon.

To understand what the Freedom Schools mean to those attending them, it is first necessary to understand several facts about the regular system of education in Mississippi.

The Mississippi educational system is geared to teach the Mississippi Educational Way of Life: Dissent is heresy. Ignorance is safer than inquiry. Fear pervades the academic atmosphere.

Example: in the spring of 1961, a number of Negro students in Jackson were expelled from (Negro) high school because they stood up in their classrooms and inquired pointedly about the Freedom Rides and their significance.

Example: More than 800 students at Alcorn A & M College (Negro) in Southwest Mississippi were tossed out of school in the spring of 1964 by the college president because they protested social conditions on the campus. The President enlisted the aid of the much-feared Mississippi Highway patrol to load the students into buses so that they could be sent home without even the opportunity to collect their belongings.

Example: also during this spring, an issue of the student newspaper at the University of Southern Mississippi (white) was confiscated by campus police under the direction of the school president W.D. McCain because it carried an article about the school administration’s refusal to grant admission to a Negro applicant. (McCain is a strong supporter of the White Citizen’s Council, and an advisory board member of the Patriotic American Youth, a campus youth organization which shares space with the John Birch Society in a Jackson bookstore. He also received a special commendation from the state legislature for refusing admittance for the fifth time to John Frazier, a student at predominantly Negro Tougaloo College.)

There are many other such examples of suppression of student rights, and even of faculty rights, e.g., the constant persecution of Ole Miss Professor James W. Silver. However, what is even more chilling is the economy of school segregation in Mississippi.

Despite the fact that Alabama spends less per pupil, black and white, than any state in the nation, the expenditure in the Mississippi Delta is even less. More important, the disparity between funds spent per white student and funds spent per black student is even greater.

In Mississippi, the county appropriates funds for education—according to its own budget—in addition to the funds contributed by the state. The following is the county appropriation, above the state minimum, for instruction per pupil in 1960-61:

North Pike County (43% non-white)\*

(McComb)

white.....\$30.89

Negro..... .76

South Pike County

(Magnolia)

white.....\$59.55

Negro..... 1.35

Forrest County (28% non-white)\*

white.....\$67.76

Negro..... 34.19

Hattiesburg Separate

white.....\$115.96

Negro..... 61.69

\*U.S. Civil Rights Commission Report on Voting, 1960.

Whites who control Mississippi have little respect for education, but use it unscrupulously to prevent Negroes from obtaining the basic democratic right, the right to vote.

For instance, while the State Penitentiary Reform Bill was still in the Senate, Sen. Howard McDonnell of Biloxi proposed an amendment which would require that the Superintendent of the penitentiary have two years of college education. Foes of the amendment said the requirement would force the ouster of the present superintendent, C.E. Breazeale. The amendment failed. McDonnell then asked that the Superintendent be required to have a high school education. That amendment was also defeated.

In April, 1964 a bill was introduced into the Senate Education Committee which would have required a high school education for the members of the county boards of education. The bill was eventually sent back to committee where lobbying took place to exclude certain counties from the provisions of the bill.

Yet, the Mississippi legislature has established voter registration requirements which lawyers contend would be extremely difficult for anyone without a law degree to pass, if the tests are honestly administered.

The Freedom Schools are a war against this academic poverty. It is not just the courses provided, but the fact that the schools are a focal point for personal expression against the oppression, on the one hand, and for personal growth and creativity, on the other. The regular Mississippi schools are fundamentally opposed to this approach.

Mrs. Reese says, "The Freedom Schools mean an exposure to a totally new field of learning, new attitudes about people, new attitudes about self, and about the right to be dissatisfied with the status quo. The children have had no conception that Mississippi is a part of the United States; their view of American history is history with no Negroes in it. It's like making a cake with no butter."

Mrs. Reese explains that “Mississippi has sold itself short. There are many good minds here which are being used as sacrificial lambs. The children are alert and eager to learn. If they had something to learn, they’d be happy to learn it.”

Both Mrs. Reese and Featherstone find themselves faced with the unexpected problem of a pupil-teacher ratio which is growing too large. Mrs. Reese tells of one teacher who is so popular that her class has increased from 15 to 27 students—who come every day. Wahman is now recruiting an additional 100 teachers for the month of August, and expects that schools in five new communities will be opened then.

Both Featherstone and Wahman point to the Negro history curriculum as possibly the most valuable legacy of the Freedom Schools this summer. “The only thing our kids knew about Negro history,” Featherstone says, “is about Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver and his peanuts.”

But subjects like chemistry and algebra are also popular. Featherstone was told by pupils in the McComb School that Negro children are taught algebra in high school, but white children begin the subject in the sixth grade. Wahman says that when the chemistry teacher left the Gulfport Freedom School, his 15 students also left in protest, and returned only when another was sent into the school.

Mrs. Reese gives an idea what the Hattiesburg schools are accomplishing: “The children are learning that somebody is supposed to listen to them. They are writing letters to the editor of Hattiesburg newspapers, and learning where to direct their complaints. At first, the children were somewhat awe-stricken with the white teachers, at their whiteness, their hair, but many are learning to appreciate them as human beings. When you get an appreciation of yourself, then you can put the other individual into his proper focus.”

But maybe Joyce Brown sums it up best:

#### THE HOUSE OF LIBERTY

I come not for fortune, nor for fame,  
 I seek not to add glory to an unknown name,  
 I did not come under the shadow of night,  
 I came by day to fight for what’s right,  
 I shan’t let fear, my monstrous foe,  
 Conquer my soul with threat and woe,  
 Here I have come and here I will stay,  
 And no amount of fear my determination can sway.

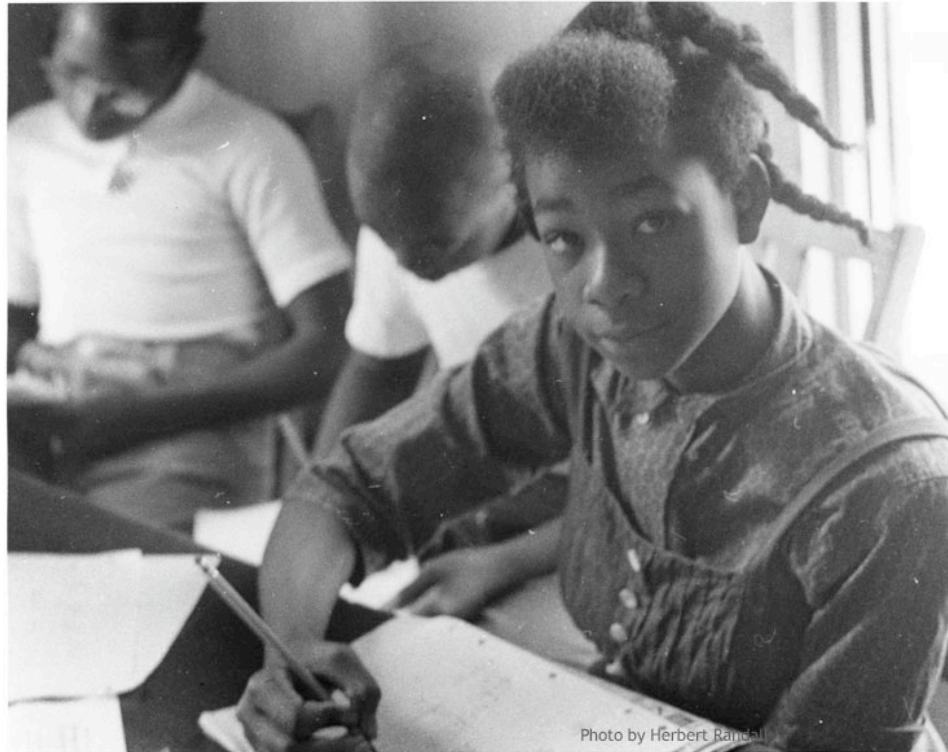
I asked for your churches, and you turned me down,  
 But I’ll do my work if I have to do it on the ground,  
 You will not speak for fear of being heard,  
 So you crawl in your shell and say, “Do not disturb,”  
 You think because you’ve turned me away,  
 You’ve protected yourself for another day.

But tomorrow surely will come,

And your enemy will still be there with the rising sun,  
He'll be there tomorrow as all tomorrows in the past,  
And he'll follow you into the future if you let him pass.

You've turned me down to humor him,  
Ah! Your fate is sad and frim,  
For even though your help I ask,  
Even without it, I'll finish my task.

In a bombed house I have to teach school  
Because I believe all men should live by the Golden Rule.  
To a bombed house your children must come,  
Because of your fear of a bomb,  
And because you've let your fear conquer your soul,  
In this bombed house these minds I must try to mold.  
I must try to teach them to stand tall and be a man,  
When you their parents have cowered down and refused to take a stand.



*“Writing in Freedom School”*

### ***FREEDOM SCHOOL DATA***

Council of Federated Organizations  
1017 Lynch Street  
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a.) *Background on Freedom Schools:* the Freedom Schools were proposed late in 1963 by Charles Cobb, a Howard University student until he joined the SNCC staff and “a gifted creative writer,” according to Freedom School Director Professor Staughton Lynd. That “help from outside Mississippi is needed if the Negro youngster were to have any chance of access to a larger world” was an obvious fact, according to Lynd, after preliminary studies of the Mississippi educational system. In *Mississippi: The Closed Society*, James Silver noted that the per capita expenditure of the Mississippi local schools boards for the white child is almost four times the figure for the Negro child. More than the statistics, the limited subject matter available for study to Mississippi Negro students, the fear of dismissal that restrains their teachers from exploring controversial topics demonstrated that if Mississippi’s Negroes were to take part in an academic process it would have to be in a context supplemental to the schooling available through the state.

b.) *Freedom Schools Operation:* As of July 26, there were 41 functioning Freedom Schools in twenty communities across the state with an enrolment of 2,135 students—twice the figure projected in planning for the summer. There are approximately 175 teaching full-time in the Freedom Schools, with recruitment of 50 to 100 more in process.



The typical Freedom School has an enrollment of 25 to 100 and a staff of five to six teachers, and is held in a church basement or sometimes the church itself, often using the outdoor area as well. Typically, the morning will be taken up with a “core curriculum” build around Negro History and citizenship. The late morning or afternoon is taken up with special classes (such as French or typing—both very popular) or projects (such as drama or the school newspaper). In the evening classes are held for adults or teen-agers who work during the day.

The idea of the school is centered on discussion of the group. One suggested guide distributed by COFO to Freedom School teachers noted, “In the matter of classroom procedure, questioning is the vital tool. It is meaningless to flood the student with information he cannot understand; questioning is the path to enlightenment. It requires a great deal of skill and tact to pose the question that will stimulate but not offend, lead to unself-consciousness and the desire to express thought. . . . The value of the Freedom Schools will derive mainly from what the teachers are able to elicit from the students in terms of comprehension and expression of their experiences.”

At a time when the nation’s educators have become concerned—and stymied—by bringing to children of the non-verbal “culturally deprived” community the ability to formulate questions and articulate perceptions, the daily pedagogical revolutions that are the basis of any success in a Freedom School classroom become overwhelming upon considering that the students are Mississippi Negroes—possibly the single most deprived group in the nation—and the teachers are culturally alien products of the much-maligned liberal arts undergraduate education. An indication of what is happening among the students and their young teachers in the Freedom Schools is given by a single line of COFO advice given to the teachers: “The formal classroom approach is to be avoided; the teacher is encouraged to use all the resources of his imagination.”

According to Director Lynd, the Freedom Schools may be dealt with in the context of three general situations: a) rural areas; b) urban areas where the civil rights movement has been strong; c) urban areas where the movement has been weak. “In the first and third situations,” analyzes Lynd, “the Freedom Schools have been most successful, not just in numbers, but in what is going on there.”

In the rural areas where there is little recreation or diversion available to the Negro community, the Freedom School becomes the center of teen-age social activities, according to Lynd. Lynd draws upon the Holmes County and Carthage Freedom Schools as examples of this rural success. When the Freedom School staff arrived in Carthage, the entire Negro community was assembled at the church to greet them; when, two days later, the staff was evicted from its school, the community again appeared with pickup trucks to help move the library to a new school site. As this is being written, the Carthage Community, with the help of summer volunteers and a National Council of Churches minister, is building its own community center which will be staffed by civil rights workers and local volunteers.

An example of the second situation, the urban success, is the Hattiesburg Freedom School system, which Lynd refers to as the “Mecca of the Freedom School world.” In Hattiesburg there are more than 600 students in five schools. Each teacher has been told to find a person from the community to be trained to take over his teaching job at the end of the summer. Much of the second session in Hattiesburg will be devoted to the training of local Freedom School teachers. “Here, as in Canton,” states Lynd, “there can be no doubt that the success of the schools stemmed from the intensive civil rights campaign in the community during the months of late winter and spring.”

In Gulfport and Greenville, urban environments with alternative attractions, the movement has not been strong enough in the past to counteract traditional time-passing activities. Lynd notes, however, that the generalization has exceptions. Holly Springs, an urban area in which the movement has not been strong in the past, has a highly successful Freedom School.

It should also be noted that in Holly Springs, Carthage, and Shaw, the Freedom Schools are competing against the regular public school which are currently in session as public schools close in early spring to allow students to chop cotton.

In Mississippi's stronghold of organized terror, the Southwest, the McComb Freedom School has proven the political value of the schools as an instrument for building confidence in the Negro community when canvassing is impractical. Lynd cites the instance of Miss Joyce Brown's poem concerning the Freedom School held at a bombed home which moved the community to provide a meeting place for the school. "Thus", notes Lynd, "the presence of a Freedom School helped to loosen the hard knot of fear and to organize the Negro community." There are 108 students at the McComb Freedom School.

c) *The Future of the Freedom Schools*: The Freedom Schools will continue beyond the end of the Summer Project in August. Freedom Schools in several areas are already running jointly with the regular public school session. The Freedom Schools offer subjects—such as foreign languages—not offered in the regular schools, and students are attracted to the informal questioning spirit of the Freedom Schools and academics based around their experiences as Mississippi Negroes. In situations like McComb, the Freedom School has proven its value to the over-all COFO political program as an organizing instrument. Also, among the various COFO programs, the Freedom School project is the one which holds out a particular hope of communication with the white community. In at least two situations, Vicksburg and Holly Springs, white children have attended for short periods. Another factor in the decision to continue the Freedom Schools is the possibility-turned-probability that the Mississippi legislature will offer private school legislation designed to sidestep public school integration (already ordered for the fall of 1964 in Jackson, Biloxi, and Leake County). One is faced by situations such as that in Issaquena County, where there are no Negro public schools and children must be transported into other counties. The backwardness of Mississippi's educational system in the context of racial discrimination is demonstrated by the fact that in many areas the impact of the 1954 Supreme Court decision that separate cannot be equal was to have separate schools erected for the first time; the step previous to school segregation is concluding that Negro Children should be educated. The rural hard-core area of Issaquena County is an example of a prolonged holdout. A final but not secondary factor is the "widespread apprehension among Mississippi Negroes as to what will happen to them when the Summer Project volunteers leave." Staughton Lynd adds, "We want to be able to tell them that the program will *not* end, that momentum cumulated during the summer months will not be permitted to slack off."

The long-range Freedom School program will be carried on through evening classes in local community centers. "Already in many communities Freedom School and Community Center programs are combined and often in the same building," according to Lynd. One source of teachers for the continuing Freedom School program will be volunteers who decide to stay beyond the summer; if only one in five stayed, fifty teachers would remain in the state. Another source would be Southern Negro students coming in under the work-study program which provides them with a one-year scholarship to Tougaloo College after one year's full-time work for SNCC. Other teachers would come through the local communities, under programs of training

such as that which has already begun in Hattiesburg. Teachers could also be provided from the ranks of full-time SNCC staff members; in areas such as McComb where the movement can't register American citizens as voters, civil rights workers can teach in Freedom Schools. There is no doubt but that, in Professor Lynd's words, "It is a political decision for any parent to let his child come to a Freedom School."

The Freedom School program can develop as an aid in enabling Mississippi Negro students to make the transition from a Mississippi Negro high school to higher education. Standardized tests will be administered to the most promising Freedom School students under the direction of the College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB) in mid-August. Evaluation of these scores and other data by the National Scholarship Service Fund for Negro Students will lead some of the Freedom School students to a program involving a) a transitional educational experience during the summer after high school, b) a reduced load during the freshman year at college, and c) financial aid. Others can be helped by the already-existing work-study program.

d) *Free Southern Theater*: As the second Freedom School session (August 3-21) begins, a tour of the Freedom Schools throughout the state is scheduled for the Free Southern theater production of *In White America*. The Free Southern Theater was organized early this year by SNCC with the assistance of COFO and Tougaloo College as an attempt to "stimulate thought and a new awareness among Negroes in the deep South," and "will work toward the establishment of permanent stock and repertory companies, with mobile touring units, in major population centers throughout the South, staging plays that reflect the struggles of the American Negro . . . before Negro and, in time, integrated audiences," according to a Free Southern Theater prospectus. An apprenticeship program is planned which will send a number of promising participants to New York for more intensive study. The company will include both professional and amateur participants.

The development of the Free Southern Theater was sparked by the "cultural desert" resulting from the closed society's restriction of the patterns of reflective and creative thought.

Each performance of *In White America* will be accompanied by theater workshops in the Freedom Schools designed to introduce students to the experience of theater through participation. As the classroom methods of the Freedom School are revolutionary in the context of traditional American patterns of education, so the Free Southern Theater brings a new concept of drama to these Mississippi students. Dr. Lynd comments that the aim of the Theater "is the creation of a fresh theatrical style which will combine the highest standards of craftsmanship with a more intimate audience rapport than modern theater usually achieves."

Segregated school, controlled textbooks, lack of discussion of controversial topics, the nature of the mass media in Mississippi demand the development of a cultural program, to be viewed in the context of education, among an entire people.

Among the objectives listed for the Free Southern Theater by its originators are "to acquaint Southern peoples with a breadth of experience with the theater and related art forms; to liberate and explore the creative talent and potential that is here as well as to promote the production of art; to bring in artists from outside the state as well as to provide the opportunity for local people with creative ability to have experience with the theater; to emphasize the universality of the problems of the Negro people; to strengthen communication between Southern Negroes; to assert that self-knowledge and creativity are the foundations of human dignity."

Among the sponsors of the Free Southern Theater are singer Harry Belafonte, authors James Baldwin and Langston Hughes, performers Ossie Davis, Ruby Dee, and Theodore Bikel, and Lincoln Kirstein, general director of the New York City Ballet.

The proposal for the Free Southern Theater originated with SNCC workers Doris Derby, Gilbert Moses, and John O'Neal, and Tougaloo drama instructor William Hutchinson.

e) Mississippi Summer Caravan of Music: Approximately 25 performing artists, including Pete Seeger, the Chad Mitchell Trio, Theodore Bikel, and SNCC's Freedom Singers, will have toured the Mississippi Summer Project Freedom Schools and Community Centers before the close of the summer. During the day they will teach in Freedom School workshops, and perform in community concerts in the evening. Communities throughout the state have already been visited by the Caravan.

The Caravan is sponsored by the New York Council of Performing Artists (Gil Turner, Chairman) and is directed by Bob Cohen at the Mississippi Summer Project Headquarters.

f) *Excerpts from Freedom School Newspapers*: The first ones to insist upon connecting the Freedom Schools to the opening of the closed society of segregated Mississippi are the young students of the Freedom Schools. The average author of a Freedom School newspaper article is between 13 and 15 years of age.

The cover of the first issue of the McComb Freedom School's "Freedom Journal" depicts a Negro in chains with a scroll below him reading, "Am I not a man and a brother?" One girl, in the same paper, remarks, ". . . too long others have done our speaking for us. . . ." Her mother is a domestic who fears for what will happen to the family due to her child's attendance at the Freedom School. One 15-year-old student there remarked that the Freedom School "enables me to know that I can get along with the whites and they can get along with me without feeling inferior to each other."

Two young students in the Holly Springs Freedom School describe their hometown: "The working conditions are bad. The wages are very low. The amount paid for plowing a tractor all day is three dollars. . . . The white man buys most of the supplies used for the annual crops, but the Negro contributes all the labor. In the fall of the year when the crop is harvested and the cotton is sold to market, the white man gives the Negro what he thinks he needs, without showing the Negro a record of the income the white man has collected from the year. This process of farming has become a custom. This way of livelihood is not much different from slavery."

A student describes her life in the "Benton County Freedom Train:" "We work eight to nine hours each day and are paid daily after work is over. We get only \$3.00 per day . . . and . . . chop cotton 8 1/2 hours to 9 hours each day. . . . The man whom we worked for is responsible for having fresh cold water handy in the field for the workers to drink. The whites also fail to take us to the store in time to eat dinner. . . . When it's harvest Negroes pick cotton by hand at \$2.00 for a hundred pounds and some places \$3.00 per hundred."

In the Mt. Zion Freedom School's "Freedom Press," a girl states she comes to the Freedom School because "I want to become a part of history also."

Joyce Brown, the 15-year-old author of "The House of Liberty" will be a senior next year at McComb's Negro Burgland High School. When she was 12 years of age she was doing voter registration canvassing when Bob Moses, director of the Mississippi Summer Project, first began voter activities in Mississippi for SNCC in 1961.



*“Palmers Crossing Community Center opening”*

### ***A REPORT, MAINLY ON RULEVILLE FREEDOM SCHOOL***

A Report, Mainly on Ruleville Freedom School, Summer Project, 1964

by Kirsty Powell

Orientation, Oxford Beginning June 21. The main effect of Oxford (Was it the main design?) was to bring each of us to the point of asking: “Do I really believe in this enough to go? Ought I to go? Do I want to go?” This was as it should have been, I think. At the time I felt that such emphasis was placed on preparing for the dangers, even in our local project group, that we did scant justice to the job of preparing to teach, or of understanding the meaning of the Freedom School concept. I still think this. I think we could have left Oxford with a much more positive understanding of what we were setting out to do, danger or no danger, than we did. I think the general sessions at Oxford were excellent and could hardly have been bettered. In the Freedom School sessions I think there were many useful things done—some of the sessions on reading, the Laubach session, the African songs, Negro History (I believe though I didn’t get to it)—but I think they could have been bettered. Next year I think it will be easier to use the history and experience of this summer to explore the Freedom School concept and I think it will be important to do this. It might even be interesting to discuss some profiles of 1964 Freedom Schools as case histories for criticism and evaluation. The curriculum was excellent, but, if Ruleville is typical it was not used as well as it deserved. This was partly because it was rather late (it would have been good to get it before Oxford) and also because it wasn’t really explored at Oxford, and perhaps because many people never really read it properly. I think most schools accepted the notion of a

core curriculum of Citizenship and Negro history. If the content of this core had been gone into much more fully at Oxford in lectures and small group discussions, and if there had been some practice teaching to demonstrate different methods of teaching it, I think the schools would have benefited and we would have left Oxford with a much more positive idea of the role of a Freedom School. On the score of method, I'd make a special (if old fashioned!) plea that volunteers (who are, after all, mostly pretty academic types) be introduced to (and if possible given a chance to try out) the project or activity method. Essentially I think this means helping pupils to be active in various ways to do their own research for information, and to give expression actively and in various ways to what they have learned—art, writing, talks, plays, interviews etc., etc. —with the possibility of choice for the pupil.

First Week in Ruleville. We arrived on the Sunday—slight chill at our first view of police truck and dog—but for those of us working at the center, the fear went when we got on the job, and found Ruleville quiet. The center was at the back of an old house which contained two other occupied dwellings. It consisted of a yard, with trees for sitting under; porch, with bathroom at one end; a wide hallway which was to become an office; an incredible attic—beams reasonably sturdy, but floor/ceiling of cardboard—where we later stored unwanted books; and two small rooms about 12 x 12 which were to be library and everything else. The first job was to sort 7000 books and cull a library of about 4000, shelve it, and store the rest. We were lucky to have somewhere to store it! This was all we did thru' Thursday, apart from volunteers' meetings to plan school and center programmes. One night at the mass meeting we were asked when school would begin. We decided we'd never be "ready," so we said we'd open for registration Friday, and for a brief introductory session. Regular school was in session in the mornings, so we decided to have adults, with baby minding in the mornings, kids in the afternoons, and leave the evenings clear for individual tuition or special classes if called for.

Morning Program 8:30 – 11:00 (often 11:30)

*Adults. The morning schedule remained the same for the whole summer. It was simple and effective.*

- 1st Hour – Citizenship (Mon, Wed. Fri)  
Health, etc. (Tues. Thurs.)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Hour – Writing (or, infrequently, Math.)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Hour – Reading

Citizenship. The lecture followed by discussion was the approach used throughout the summer. All the freedom school teachers gave at least one session each, and voter registration and research people, and visitors were also used. This was good for both teachers and listeners. The topics chosen were in three different series.

- 1<sup>st</sup> 3 weeks:
  1. Harriet Tubman
  2. Booker T. Washington and Du Bois
  3. and 4. Negro in Mississippi and the South
  5. Negro in the North
  6. The White Southerner
  7. and 8. The Movement
  9. Non-Violence
- 4<sup>th</sup> week: - 1. The Freedom Rides

2. Power structure in Sunflower Country
3. A Journey Through India – and Gandhi.
4. Freedom Democratic Party

Last 3 weeks:- 1. African Background

2. Slavery
3. Background to Civil War
4. Lincoln
5. Reconstruction
6. Birth of Jim Crow (Reading only)
7. Booker T. Washington and Du Bois (Reading only)
8. George Washington Carver
9. NAACP (Reading only)
10. Important 20<sup>th</sup> Cent. Negroes
11. Montgomery, Birmingham, and M.L. King (Reading only)
12. Civil Rights Bill and the National Elections.

This Citizenship program worked well. Our adherence to the lecture method all the way was somewhat unimaginative but it's a bit difficult to think how else it might have been done. I'm not sure how successful "activity methods" would be with adults—might be worth trying. Discussion improved as the summer wore on. In fact, I think the sessions might have been improved if the lecture time had been greatly reduced, and then previously planned "questions for discussion" had then been thrashed out.

Health I don't know the schedule for this. It was done 2 days a week for 8 weeks by one teacher, and I think it might have been better shared out a bit more. I think the course might have been improved by adding some basic physiology—with plenty of pictures and diagrams—and by using more demonstrations for the teaching of first aid. There was certainly no doubt about the interest of the women in the subject. There were a couple of sessions on food, and a recipe sharing session which proved most successful and ended in the production of a collection of Freedom School recipes. One topic that was not discussed that might usefully have been, was buying and housekeeping—sort of thing you get in one of those paperback shoppers' guides. Another subject that was asked for that we never supplied was Sewing.

Writing. As with Citizenship and Health all the adults remained in one class for writing. Usually, this was about 12 to 15 students, numbers fluctuated somewhat between six and 30. The method used was to have three to six teachers on hand circulating while the writing was being done, to help and to answer questions and to correct. The topic usually arose out of the preceding citizenship session. Very little was done to structure it, the idea being simply to encourage them to put thoughts on paper as freely as possible. I think this unstructured approach was good and perhaps liberating in a way. Certainly it produced some very interesting, albeit weirdly punctuated and spelled genuine writing, most revealing of thoughts, feelings and experience.

Later in the summer, we did attempt to teach certain structures: form filling, the sentence and with it the period and the capital letter; personal letter; business letter; report of a meeting.

I think we were wise to leave this till the end of the summer. Though there is a great eagerness to learn the proper forms, I think that to have begun this way might have been rather inhibiting.

A few of the people who came were near illiterates and were in need of straight out handwriting practice. Even these, I think, benefited from the fairly free approach, provided they continued to come. I think we should probably have had a special class for them, and perhaps we'd have attracted more and held them.

At least the team teaching approach guaranteed fairly individual teaching of each person.

Reading. Practically all the adults were given an individual textbook test (sometimes called "informal reading inventory") using a set of basal school readers. This test is familiar to all teachers of reading. The purpose of the test was to discover the instructional reading level of each student; i.e., the level at which over 100 running words, he makes 2%–5% errors in word recognition. On the basis of this testing we divided the students into 3 reading groups.

1. All below 3rd Grade went into a literacy class. These worked on the Gattengo "Words in Color" system and were taught by Linda Davis. I don't know what Linda's final judgment on the success of the course was. One of the advantages of the method is that it is useful in improving writing as well as reading. One woman, in particular, benefited from this, and made quite remarkable improvement not only in handwriting, but in composition. The success of the method depends on faithful attendance and a pretty high degree of concentration on the part of the student, and, with the exception of the one woman mentioned, the less literate students attended least faithfully. My own feeling was that the method postponed actual reading for such a long time that it tended to be a bit discouraging. But I am really very ignorant of the method and predisposed to be critical of highly phonetic approaches to the teaching of reading, so that it would be important to get Linda's own appraisal of the success both of the method and of this particular experience.

2. 3rd and 4th Grade were taught by Fred Miller, who used an easy reading newspaper (not Junior Scholastic, but something similar) which people seemed to enjoy reading. Only trouble was that the paper was rather expensive.

3. 5th Grade and above were my group and were, in fact, the largest group. We read materials on Negro history, most of them written by us especially for the purpose, because most available materials were too difficult even for this group. We began with the Ebony Emancipation issue, in which we found plenty of good material written in impossibly difficult and high flown language. We began with the "Ten Dramatic Moments" which when rewritten, proved excellent. We read also parts of the Sarah Patton Boyle and Frederick Douglass articles, the M.L.K. "I Have a Dream" speech, several issues of the local "Freedom Fighter," the mimeod newspaper produced by the Center. In the last few weeks, we read materials written by all the teachers, following the last Citizenship syllabus (see page 2).

This group was really a delight to teach, and the readings always produced, if not discussion, at least very pertinent and often moving comments relating the thing read to the situation in Miss. today.

On two occasions we read poems: Margaret Burroughs "What Shall I tell My Children who are Black?" which produced really excellent participation, and Eve Merriam's "Tomorrow's Footsteps" and Naomi Madgett's "Midway" which served to sum up and reinforce the thoughts of the summer in a very effective way. If a teacher likes poetry, and has a few simple clues about how to present it, I think it is often very much appreciated.

My own method for teaching reading—or rather, for reading something with a group who has some skill in reading—usually followed the standard procedure enshrined in most American basal reading systems. I find the procedure extremely helpful, so I set it out.



1. Introduce the piece to be read, arousing interest, supplying background, explaining new concepts. In the process of doing this introduce any words that you think are new or difficult, or perhaps merely basic to understanding the reading, and write them on the blackboard, as you use them.

2. Have the class read the passage silently section by section, posing a question to direct and motivate their reading before each section, and discussing the answers briefly at the end of each section read. How long each section to be read should be will depend on many things, notably the skill of the group. I found that a reading 3/4 page of typed quarto long, consisting of 3 or 4 paragraphs, was enough to do in one hour-long lesson, and we generally read it silently paragraph by paragraph.

3. Read the whole passage through orally—usually around the class in turn.

4. Discuss meaning of passage as whole.

Baby Minding At the first announcement of Freedom School at the mass meeting, we invited mothers to bring their children, and promised to have nursery care for them. There were times when we repented of this invitation, but, on balance, I think it was very good that we were able to provide this service, and that the beginnings of a kindergarten were, in fact, established over the summer. Looking after anything up to 15 kids, ages ranging between 15 months and 5 years was a far more formidable task than any of us realized. The people who bore the brunt of the work and worry were the 4 community center workers, though some of the freedom school teachers did help some of the time also. Aside from the abysmal lack of equipment with which we began, I think that what made the task hard was that all of us, those involved, and those not involved, tended to underrate its importance. It was important not just because it made the attendance of mothers possible, but for its own sake, and because it paved the way for the permanent kindergarten that now exists. The “curriculum” included the usual games, walks, stories, songs etc. —but these tended to require too much discipline and concentration. Things were much better when we acquired some simple equipment—blocks, tinker toys, wagon toy phone—which made self directed free play possible. Especially considering the age range, this kind of equipment was absolutely essential. A mattress also roved essential, as there were always a few babies who spent the morning squealing, or gurgling, or sleeping on it.

I think if this is to be part of the program next year, it should be spoken about at Orientation, shown to be important, and, if kids are interested, they should be encouraged to prepare themselves for it.

### *Afternoon Program: Kids*

The Ruleville Central High School was in session 7:30 AM to 1:30 so Freedom School met from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM.

There were 6 teachers, so we divided into six different classes according to age group 10 to 12 year olds; 13 and 14 year olds; 15 and 16 yr. old boys; 15 and 16 year old girls; 17 year olds; 18 years and over.

We have no accurate record of numbers and attendance, but I think the total number as probably about 120, and our daily attendance between 50 and 80.

At the end of the 3rd week, we lost 3 teachers . . . as they went to Indianola to set up a Freedom School there. The three different schedules which we worked to during the summer reflect the staff changes.

Schedule I

1st Hour: in Age Groups for Citizenship, Reading, Writing.

2nd Hour: Electives—most met 2 days a week, some 1 day only

Typing	Reading	Art
French	African Culture	Biology
Music	Health	

The electives were taught not only by Freedom School teachers but by Community Center people also.

3rd Hour: Principally Recreation

Also some electives

Also canvassing—when needed.

One feature of this schedule was that we never met as a whole school together in a general session. I think this was a weakness. We did have one general session in the last week, when we sang a few freedom songs and then heard a talk about M.F.D.P., and then broke into age groups to discuss it. The kids liked this, and we had decided to do it once a week when we had to abandon Schedule I and devise a plan that would work with 3 teachers only.

Schedule I worked well, on the whole. Good relationships were built up between teacher and kids in classes that ranged in size from 6 to 20. One problem proved to be the numbers of hangers on and dropouts who wanted to hang around the center but were unwilling to join a class. There was some debate as to whether they should be told to go or allowed to hang around. I think in the end the former opinion won out, though it was never very rigidly enforced. My own approach is that they should have been allowed to come and sit around, provided they were not a nuisance. I think that some arts of persuasion should have been used to enveigle them into classes, but I feel that there's always the chance that someone will come further in if he's given a welcome, allowed to hang around, and not badgered. I think a community center should be as free and permissive a place as possible. On the whole the younger kids came to classes more faithfully than the older ones, though some teachers managed to build up a very good relationship with their older kids.

Schedule 2 was designed to meet the conditions of the fourth week when there were only 3 Freedom School teachers (though 3 more expected the next week) and when we wanted to use community center personnel as much as possible. We decided also to draw on voter registration and research volunteers.

1st Hour: Mass Meeting or General Session, to begin with Freedom Songs, general announcements, contributions from the kids etc, followed by a talk by a special speaker, as follows: —

1. The Freedom Rides—Rabbi Levine
2. Sunflower County—in context of Federal, State, County, and Town systems of Governments; given by Jerry Techlin, Research.
3. The Party System—George Winter and Len Edwards.
4. Education in the U.S. —Jerry Tecklin
5. A Journey to India—Gandhi and Non-violence—Kirsty Powell
6. Book Review Session—in which a number of teachers and community center people took part. Books of various kinds were introduced—beginning reading (Seuss etc), Fairy

Tales, Alice in W. , Biography, Travel and Adventure, Novel (Huck Finn). After the session the library was open for checking out books. A most successful kind of session, I think.

## 2nd Hour: Expression Groups—Art, Role Playing, Writing

The whole school broke up into 3 groups, initially on the basis of preference, but we tried to insist that each child have one day in each group, and he was then free to go where he like. The resulting groups had a wide age range, but on the whole this did not prove as difficult as might have been expected—it was even, in some ways, rather interesting. The groups were large and in all of them we used team teaching. The aim was to find ways of expressing through writing, art, or role playing something of what had been spoken of in the speech. However, it so happened that the week we began working to Schedule 2 was also the week when the kids began working on a proposed picket of the Central High school for the purpose of urging teachers to vote. The result was that the role playing became geared almost entirely to role playing the picket, and some of the art work became directed to sign making.

Role Playing—this proved far and away the most popular, and there were sometimes as many as 30 or 40 in the group. In Role-playing the picket, great enthusiasm was developed, not only for the picket, but for role playing as such. As a result, in Schedule 3 a good drama group emerged, and role playing was used a good deal in the age groups, as part of ordinary class work.

Art—This group began with posters. It began to be exciting, however, when they were encouraged to do free, abstract works with paint, and then with charcoal and flat, not the tip of the pencil. Sometimes these were intended as emotional expressions.

Writing—The writing group did, generally, take the topic of the speech as its inspiration, and it often proved necessary to explore the ideas presented to it pretty thoroughly in discussion before writing was done, and this gave opportunity for useful review—but cut down on writing time. I think probably the freer approach that we used with the adults would have produced more creative results.

## 3rd Hour: Electives (same) and Recreation, and Canvassing

This schedule 2 had a great deal to commend it. When the speaker was dramatic like Rabbi Levine the meeting of the whole school was good, and the expression groups were really quite exciting and creative. I think they gave the kids a sense of freedom which engendered a good deal of enthusiasm. It was good, too, to be able to involve the community center and voter registration people in both the talks and the team teaching—in fact they were essential. In fact it seemed such a good scheme that there was some discussion about whether we should continue with it after the new teachers arrived. However in the end we decided that the advantages of intimate association with an age group were of even more value than the general excitement of the expression groups, so Schedule 3 ended up something of a compromise between the two previous schemes.

## Schedule 3

1<sup>st</sup> hour—General Session with freedom songs, etc., and a talk on Negro history—topics same as for last 3 weeks of adult program. The 6 freedom school teachers took turns in giving the talks.

2<sup>nd</sup> hour—age groups. These were somewhat reformed

The 10-12 year group had become so big that it split into 2 classes

The 13-14 group remained the same, and the rest of the senior kids became one class, with 2 (sometimes 3) teachers working as a team with them.

3<sup>rd</sup> hour—Electives, recreation, canvassing

The Value of the general session came to be debated among the teachers. Very early in the piece it was decided that the 10 to 12 group should meet in their own class, because it was impossible to talk to them and to the 18 year olds at the same time. However, even for the older students it seemed too passive a method, with too little interchange between speaker and audience. As a result, in the second last week we decided to have a general session only once a week, and to have the first two hours in age groups. This places a great responsibility on the individual teacher—but if he accepts that, it makes possible a much more active learning situation.

Age Groups. The switch in teachers mid-stream meant the 10-12's and the 13 and 14's were the only one who continued as separate class groups with the one teacher all the way. This was a great advantage, and I think, it is the main reason why we didn't do as good a job with the older students as we might have. I don't have reports on all the classes, but it might be useful to report on the two that I have reports on: Lucia Guest's and my own.

10-12's This class showed great enthusiasm. By the beginning of Schedule 3 it had grown so much that we split it. It met on the steps of the Sanctified Church, and the high school teachers who lived in the houses opposite had a grandstand view of what went on. Lucia has never taught before, but she strikes me as a very good example of a naturally good teacher—creative, inventive, full of enthusiasm. I quote from a letter in which she gives an account of what she did with her class.

Looking back and trying to say what I did with my classes, I realize how much time I misused or wasted. If I had it to do over again, I think I would shoot for more concrete efforts, perhaps more writing, more art work. As far as what I did do: I guess a great concentration on world geography. I.E. what are the continents, where are they, what are some of the key countries in each continent, and how do people live there? We did the world maps and the map of Australia (big maps which each kid colored and labeled). I spend time on Australia—pop., largest cities, states, etc.

We did maps of Africa, and all the readings on Africa which we prepared. I also spent some time on Egypt, using National Geographics. As far as Negro History—this is where I fell down, I'm afraid. We went from Africa to U.S. slave trade, to Slavery in U.S. and skipped to Civil War, and didn't get further. As for the Movement: we went through the M.L. King comic book, and learned about "Snick" and what SNCC stands for. As for Government and politics (American): I attempted to teach some idea of the relationship between, and what are the 4 governments—municipal, county, state, Federal, also the importance of the ballot and where it fits into the scheme of things. As far as how I taught this:

1. I learned the great value of the blackboard, and of pictures.
2. Role playing—towards the last, I attempted to translate everything I could into role-playing—even geography.

13-14's—my class. I took Negro History as a core, following roughly the adult course (p.2), but leaving out the more sociological topics (like the Negro in the North etc.) My method was to introduce a topic, like Harriet Tubman, for instance, by telling the story, talking about it, looking

at pictures, reading about it. This generally took one day. Then for the next two or three days, the kids followed up on this topic in their own way. I brought all the books, magazines, mimeoed material, pictures, etc. I could find to class, and got kids to choose what they wanted to do, and use the resource materials to help them. Some did historical, some creative writing, some drew pictures, or copied poems, or copied historical documents like runaway slave notices, etc. At the end of the summer, we displayed the work on all the units, arranged chronologically, to present a kind of perspective on Negro history.

See page 9 for other classes.

Electives. These were popular, but difficult to organize. Things went better when we submitted to the inevitable and started banging a gong to induce people to change over on time. I think we were perhaps too ambitious in the number of electives we tried to run, and some kids never settled into one long enough to get somewhere. However, I think the idea of electives has a lot to commend itself.

Typing—perhaps the most popular—had to exclude the younger members for lack of room. Mustered 6 typewriters, and had two classes of 6 each afternoon.

Health—a small but faithful group continued the whole summer. Included First Aid Physiology, and even some dissection—frog!

French—Great interest in learning a foreign language—all simple conversation —unfortunately we lost the teacher who was doing this.

Music and African culture—both began and fizzled out, either because we lost the teacher at the end of the first 3 weeks, or because the teacher was drafted to another elective.

Art—really got under way after the impetus given under the 2<sup>nd</sup> schedule. Much enthusiasm—great ignorance of simplest techniques—need encouragement to be bold and free in their work

Dancing—very popular—did modern dancing, singing games, and occasionally the kids taught us the monkey etc. Only girls, except once or twice for singing games and folk dances.

Role Playing—became an elective in the last three weeks—emerged from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Schedule.

Devoted itself to preparing an unscripted play about the High School protest—cast of about 20, one hour long. Presented it at the Freedom Festival, last day of school, and it was a great success.

Reading—we tried hard to offer reading of various kinds as an elective, but on the whole we did not establish sufficient continuity to make a great success of it. The moral is, I think, that reading should not be an elective. Something was done however. Again we tried to test and group the kids, but the great variations in ability and the paucity of teachers made it hard to get kids reading in a group at their own level. In the end we established three groups that had a fairly continuous existence in the last three weeks: -

1. Seriously retarded readers. This group numbered 4 at its maximum. It used a new series of beginning readers based on Karl Fries Linguistic approach and written by Mrs. Rosemary Wilson for a new experimental reading program being conducted by the Board of Education in Philadelphia, PA. The set of readers remains in Ruleville and I think they're excellent (but reading is a field full of partisanship!). I think this group made progress (age range 12 to 20) but they scarcely got beyond the "alphabet book". Teaching beginning reading must have provision for a long term project to be useful.

2. 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade. This group read the Seuss books with great pleasure.

3. 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade and up. This group read the 4<sup>th</sup> grade basic reader together—but it was too difficult for some, too easy for others.

Once or twice I tried individual reading—and I think this would have been the answer if I had succeeded in getting it organized. Each child would then spend most of the lesson reading a book at his own level silently, coming to the teacher for 5 to 10 minutes of individual oral reading, questioning about comprehension, and word study.

\*The other classes, 15's and up (continue from p. ) The senior classes had great discontinuity of teachers. They concentrated exclusively on citizenship and history, using mainly discussion, with some (I suspect too little in most cases ) reading and writing. I think senior students can also learn form more active methods.

### *Highlights of the School Program*

1. Caravan of Music. We had about 6 visits from folk singers and these were all a great delight. Among those specially remembered will be the drummer who let everyone have a go at the drums one by one after the show, and Jackie Washington with his children's songs and Barbara Dane, who taught us "It isn't nice". It would have been good if there had been more attempt to teach songs.

2. The Visit of 13 of the Women from National Women's Organisations gave us all a boost. A great crowd turned up and we put on quite a program. They sat in on "baby minding" and on a reading lesson. Then Mrs. Hamer, Mrs. MacDonald, Mrs. Johnson, and Mrs. Tucker told the story of the Movement in Ruleville, after which followed some very good discussion. Then they met volunteers and heard Jerry Tecklin talk about voter registration, research, and the law—then more discussion. In the afternoon, the kids took charge: told the story of the protest at school, and then did a role play performance of the picket.

3. Meridian Freedom School Convention. Three kids went from Ruleville armed with a program for Senator, Congressman etc worked out with other young people over a whole afternoon and a morning of strenuous discussion. They voted for Mr. MacDonald for Mayor of Ruleville and Martin Luther King superintendent of Education.

Ruleville made a good contribution to the Convention. The story of the school protest and the motion of Bobbie Cannon inspired plans for the state wide boycott. Ora Doss and Eddie Johnson both made enthusiastic reports back to the Freedom School. Both were impressed by how hard work it was. As Eddie said in his report, "It wasn't fun!"

Actually I think that next year the program might include a bit more fun—a dance early in the program, and perhaps other recreation planned to help kids meet each other, or perhaps more highly organized communal meals to provide opportunity for kids to meet people from other places, or perhaps some discussion groups or study circles devoted not just to drafting motions, but to the task of studying and discussing something written specially for the purpose

4. In White America. This was a great success. It was done on the back porch, and the 200 or so people sat on benches in the sun or stood. Despite Gil Moses' misgivings about an out-of doors daylight performance, I thought the setting was excellent. The audience almost became a part of the play. Small boys climbed on the porch to go to the bathroom in the middle of a scene, dogs and hens paraded in front of the stage and there was an intimacy and informality about the

performance that underlined for me the impression that the play was woven out of the very stuff of these people's lives.

5. Freedom Festival. The last day of school was given over to a Freedom Festival. In the morning the adults came for a tea party which somehow proved a bit stuffy and "middle class".

Conversation didn't flow as freely as usual though I think people enjoyed it. In the library we had a display of kids' writing and art work and maps. In the afternoon we had a programme presented mainly by the kids, but two adults also took part: some plays written by the kids, a puppet show about the valiant knight Bob Moses and the wicked witch, Segregation, some poems of Eve Merriam recited in chorus, three freedom songs written by the kids, and an excellent, long, rehearsed, unscripted play telling the whole story of the school protest. Finally, Mr. Macdonald presented each kid with a dictionary.

### *The School Protest*

This story deserves setting out in detail some time, but here I'll just give the main facts. The idea arose among the tiny group of kids active in the Ruleville Student Action Group which was stimulated into action when the volunteers came down. They began talking to the teachers about voting, and role played interviews with them in the meetings. Then, one meeting, after all the volunteers had gone they decided to announce a date to picket the school (August 5<sup>th</sup>) and to prepare for it they began having daily campus meetings at noon, and practiced role laying the picket during freedom school. They produced a leaflet setting out these plans, urging kids to come and join them, and urging the teachers to go down and register. That was the first phase.

Then, discussion with Charles MacLaurin and others threw doubt on the wisdom of having a picket, especially one whose date had already been announced. It was decided, as a kind of face saving device, to write a letter to the Principal and faculty, setting out a list of demands, and saying that if the demands were not met in reasonable time, they would take direct action. Besides asking teachers to go and register, the demands included such things as asking for an account of money earned cotton picking, for a student government and clubs, and for teachers to take the lead in demanding better, and integrated education. The letter was handed personally to each member of faculty on Monday morning. In addition, in Chapel two kids took advantage of a regular space in the program for student announcements, to make freedom speeches. Eddie Johnson expounded the letter, and Bobbie Cannon told teachers that there was "a new day" coming and they should be leading their people into it. The result was electric. The kids applauded and the faculty preserved a stony silence. That was the end of the second phase.

By the end of the morning, a notice had been handed to every student purporting to come from the Superintendent saying that any student who took part in any demonstration would be suspended. When MC. Perry tore up this notice saying he didn't "want any of that trash", he was immediately hauled off to the Principal and suspended. He tried to return to school next day; the Principal called the cops, and he was marched from the school at gunpoint. The Mayor then warned him that if he wished to return to school he would have to sign a statement that he would never again take part in civil rights activity. He went home to the plantation, and after a day, decided he would sign the statement. On the bus he learned that the kids of his class had staged a walkout the day before in protest against his suspension. School was pretty tense. The result was that the minute he got on campus the cops were again called. This time he was brought for trial, sentenced to 30 days and \$100 for disturbance of the peace, and it was 10 days before we bailed him out on appeal on \$500 bond. During this period things were happening at school, though I'm

not very clear on the details. The kids generally agreed that they had missed the right moment for a demonstration by the whole school when they did not stage a wholesale walkout the day M.C. Perry was expelled. The kids had a meeting to discuss the letter and its demands; Mrs. Hamer had a meeting with the faculty; and the lawyer, David Godstick and I think Len Edwards met with the Principal. The kids brought their story to the meridian Freedom School Convention, and there plans were made for a statewide boycott. This was the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase.

### *The Library*

About 30 volunteers spent the first 4 days of the summer project doing nothing but sort the 7000 books piled in the Center, culling about 4000, and shelving them. We started lending books immediately using a check-out book. A group of kids volunteered to act as librarians, and worked on the issuing of books, and later on numbering and ordering them on the shelves. Eventually, we decided to use our very simple form of Dewey, using only the numbers for the main classes and a few other numbers within each class to apply to sections where we had many books. The system suited our purpose, and I think it worked pretty well. We had one shelf of “Book By and About Negroes” but otherwise there were no special displays—though I think they would be a good idea. The kids and I began work on a catalogue but we grew faint hearted, and decided it was better to concentrate on getting a good shelf plan first. We had a couple of book review sessions both for kids and for adults, and these were most successful and provoked a lot of borrowing of books. After the work day, when tables and benches were made for the library, we started to keep one room quiet for reading and studying. Before the regular school closed for picking, some kids had already got into the habit of using the library to do homework, as well as to write letters and read.

During September, we tried hard to get the library to the point where the kids could run it themselves, and a chief librarian and group of assistants were doing a pretty good job, and were represented in the board.

As to the quality of the books, they included everything from Nancy Drew to Thomas Mann. Perhaps the Thomas Mann would be better in a college library, but I cling to the thought that Richard Wright might come out of Ruleville. And anyway, as long as the High School has no library to speak of, the Center Library must serve as a High School Library. The Literature and History sections of the library were quite good but it was pretty weak on Science and the Social Sciences.

### *Teachers*

I think we were extraordinarily lucky in the high quality of teachers, and their genuineness. We began with 6 people, with Liz Fusco as co-ordinator. When Liz and 2 others went to Indianola, we got 3 new people. Out of all nine of these, 4 were graduates, and 2 professional teachers. I think it was fairly obvious though, that neither being a graduate, nor being a professional teacher had much to do with being a good Freedom School teacher. When we lost our co-ordinator, it was suggested that we agree among ourselves as to who should take her place, and this was how I took over. I think this was a good way to do it, and it seemed to work out happily.

Like most Freedom School staffs we had our problems of personal relations, but on the whole I think we worked well as a team, and this is one reason why the summer was a joyful



experience for us, all other things notwithstanding. I think the most important relationship for the school is that between the co-ordinator and the rest of the teachers. In some ways it is a pity that orientation is not long enough for a co-ordinator to be the choice of the group. But in any case, I think that the more the co-ordinator can act as “mere co-ordinator” and not as head the better. I think the spirit of staff meetings should be thoroughly egalitarian, and everyone should be aware that he or she has equal responsibility. I think staff meetings are important and should be quite frequent—at least once a week. I think it’s important that schedule and curriculum be planned co-operatively by the whole staff, though I also think it’s important that each individual teacher have freedom to develop his own curriculum for his class. I don’t think these two things are necessarily contradictory.

Another problem which I think we shared with many schools was some difficulty in working out a good relationship with the community center staff. I think in the end we succeeded, partly because at the personal level we got along well and enjoyed each other—which was just lucky—partly because the Freedom School needed the community center people in order to function. Difficulties were, however, inherent in a situation in which Freedom School and Community Center functions overlapped and in which Community Center functions were much less clearly defined than were Freedom School functions. One difficulty, for instance was whether Freedom School or Community Center co-ordinator should lead joint staff meetings. In the end, we agreed that where the adult morning classes or the kids afternoon classes were concerned it should be rated Freedom School business, but all other business was Community Center business. This seemed to work out O.K. Most of the time the two staffs met separately, and the Freedom School simply used all the community center personnel as teachers.

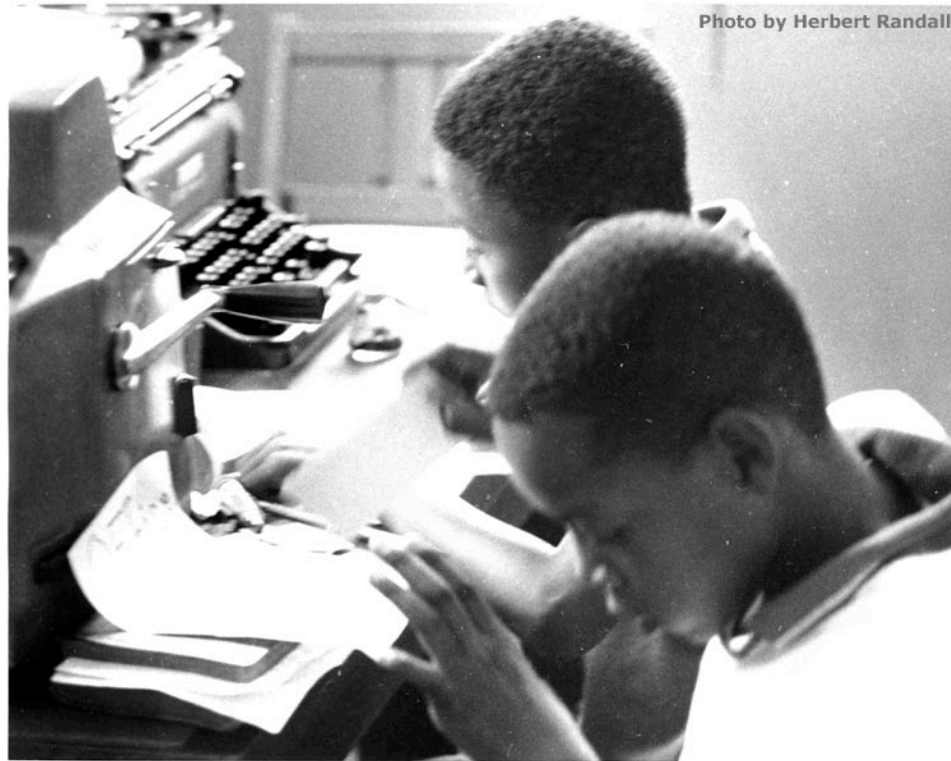
I gather that in some projects there was a good deal of tension between voter registration and freedom school volunteers. On the whole I think we escaped this. I don’t know why: perhaps partly because some of the Freedom School and Community Center people were as militant as any, and when arrests were made in Drew all three groups were involved. I do remember one argument when plans for the school protest were developing when someone in voter registration suggested that all the school program should now be geared to the picket, and I protested that if freedom schools were to retain their integrity they had to be centers of real education, not just of propaganda. In actual fact, I don’t think this was disputed. Not only that, there was a lot of sharing of work at every level. Voter registration people gave talks in freedom school and freedom school people helped canvas and make out file cards, and everyone helped in the Community Center’s work day, or in food and clothing distribution.

### *Community Center*

Looking on, it seemed to me that in many ways the community center people had a hard time because it was not clear at the outset what their job was. They took on the responsibility for baby minding in the mornings. They organized a program for the under 10 year olds 2 afternoons a week. They accepted responsibility for the physical state of the center. They helped organize food and clothing distribution. They conducted a health survey. They planned and carried out a most successful Work Day when volunteers and local people made tables and benches, laid linoleum, and painted. All of these things were important but I think that sometimes Community Center people felt they were doing the jobs that were left over after others had done the “main jobs.” Not only that, I think some community center talent was not perhaps used to its fullest extent, simply because at the beginning it was not clear enough what there was to be done.

*Handing Over*

When Linda Davis came back from the meeting in Jackson with the news that she was to stay at the center through the winter, she discussed with the few remaining volunteers a plan for having a Board of the Community Center elected by the Mass meeting. This was in line with the feeling often expressed during the summer that somehow the Center had to become the community's. The election of the Board was quite a milestone. In the last month I was down after the summer project proper was over there were many signs that the community was really claiming its own center. A team of kids helped man the radio. Another team of kids became librarians. A dozen or so 4 and 5 year olds began to come regularly to the kindergarten which Linda organized. Adults came 2 nights a week to reading classes. And the young people started to organize their own program with recreation and study and discussion concentrated in an organized way, mainly on Sunday afternoon. Perhaps more important, people, young and old began to drop in to the community center for various reasons: to borrow a book, to read or write in the library, to play Checkers or Monopoly, to talk, or dance, or listen to the radio, to meet before going to the courthouse to attempt to register, or before going to a county wide meeting on Sunday afternoon in Indianola, to talk over a problem, or to report some news, or to play basketball or football or croquet. If any confirmation were wanted of the need for community centers, this was it surely. In just 3 months this Ruleville Community Center had become a real center of community life in the Negro community. No one looked forward to the winter. But, as a local person said to me—not a regular attender at the center—“We all know where we'll be running if there's trouble.”



*“Freedom School students typing”*

### ***FREEDOM SCHOOLS IN MISSISSIPPI, 1964***

From the carbon copies of the spring’s letters and reports I see what real apprehensions, as well as hopes, the people who dreamed of Freedom Schools had. Out of Charlie Cobb’s idea of a situation in which there would be questioning, release from rigid squelching of initiative and expression—from Charlie Cobb’s bitterness about the way the Negro has had to be silent in order to survive in white America, and his vision of the kid’s articulateness and reaching for change, meaningful change, in Mississippi—out of his seeing that kids are ready to see “the link between a rotting shack and a rotting America”—came the original plan for Freedom Schools in Mississippi. That it could be an idea that people working desperately on voter registration and on keeping alive in the state could take seriously is perhaps evidence of the validity of Charlie Cobb’s dream: Mississippi needed more, needs more, than that all Negroes 21 and over shall have the right to vote. The staff in Mississippi understood what Charlie was dreaming because they, too, were daring to dream that what could be done in Mississippi could be deeper, more fundamental, more far-reaching, more revolutionary than voter registration alone: more personal, and in a sense more transforming, than a political program.

The decision to have Freedom Schools in Mississippi then, seems to have been a decision to enter into every phase of the lives of the people of Mississippi. It seems to have been a decision to set the people free for politics in the only way that people really can become free, and that is totally. It was an important decision for the staff to be making, and so it is not surprising that the curriculum for the proposed schools become everyone’s concern. I understand that Louis Chaffee, Dona Moses, Mendy Samstein, and Casey Hayden as well as Noel Day, Jane Stembridge, and Jack Minnis worked on and argued about what should be taught, and what the realities of

Mississippi are, and how those realities affect the kids, and how to get the kids to discover themselves as human beings. And then, I understand, Staughton Lynd came in to impose a kind of beautiful order on the torment that the curriculum was becoming—torment because it was not just curriculum: it was each person on the staff in Mississippi painfully analyzing what the realities of his world were, and asking himself, with what pain I can only sense, what right he had to let the kids of Mississippi know the truth, and what right he had had to keep it from them until now. And because of these sessions, the whole concept of what could be done in Mississippi must have changed.

In a way, the Freedom Schools began to operate in those planning session. A section of the curriculum called “Poor whites, poor Negroes and their fears,” for example, considers the unity of experience between whites and Negroes, as well as the psychological and political barriers. And out of the discussions that produced this part of the curriculum came, perhaps, the idea of a “White Folks’ Project,” and the intense economic orientation of what was begun in Research, and Federal Programs, also new projects. And out of work with the people day after day in the Freedom Schools emerged medical concerns, and farm league ideas, and the community building of community centers. It was because the people trying to change Mississippi were asking themselves the real questions about what is wrong with Mississippi that the Summer Project in effect touched every aspect of the lives of the Negroes in Mississippi, and started to touch the lives of the whites.

It was the asking of questions, as I see it, that made the Mississippi Summer Project different from other voter registration projects and other civil rights activities everywhere else in the South. And so it is reasonable that the transformations that occurred—and transformations did occur—out of the Freedom School experience occurred because for the first time in their lives kids were asking questions.

The way the curriculum finally came out was that it was based on the asking of certain questions, questions which kept being asked through the summer, in connection with the kids’ interest in their Freedom School teachers (mostly northern, mostly white, mostly still in college), in connection with Negro History, in connection with African culture, in connection even with the academic subjects, as well as in connection with the study of the realities of Mississippi in the light of Nazi Germany, 1935. The so-called “Citizenship Curriculum” set up two sets of questions. The primary set was: 1. why are we (teachers and students) in Freedom Schools? 2. what is the Freedom Movement? 3. what alternatives does the Freedom Movement offer us? What was called the secondary set of questions, but what seemed to me the more important, because more personal, set was: 1. what does the majority culture have that we want? 2. what does the majority culture have that we don’t want? 3. what do we have that we want to keep?

The answering of these questions, and the continual raising of them in many contexts, may be said perhaps to be what the Freedom Schools were about. This was so because in order to answer anything out of what these questions suggest, it is necessary for the student to confront the question of who he is, and what his world is like, and how he fits into it or is alienated from it.

It was out of the experience of asking these questions that the transformations occurred. At the beginning of the summer, with rare amazing exceptions, the kids who were tentatively exploring us and the Freedom Schools were willing to express about themselves only one thing with honesty and passion, without the characteristic saying of the thing they think the white man wants to hear: that thing was that as soon as they could gather enough money for a ticket they were going off to Chicago, or to California! To leave the state was their ambition, and about it they were certain, even though they had not thought any further than that, even in terms of where

the money was to come from, and certainly not in terms of what they would find there and what they would do there. Some sense of “go home to my Lord and be free”—some vague hope of a paradise beyond—seemed to inform their passion for the north, their programless passion.

But by the end of the summer almost all of these kids were planning to stay in Mississippi.

Within the flexible structure of the Freedom School it was natural that a confession of—an insistence on—the desire to race northward lead to a discussion of the condition of the Negro in the North, about which most of the teachers could tell specifically. And then came the news stories about Harlem, and Rochester, and Medford, Massachusetts, and the kids were interested, and worried. But it was not just because the truth about the North began to shatter their dream of it as a paradise that the kids changed their minds. The yearning for the North was, of course, the expression of a need to escape the intolerability of the situation in Mississippi. But the nature of their need to escape was that they really did not know what it was about Mississippi that they hated—or, rather, they felt that what was intolerable for them had somehow to do with the white man, somehow to do with getting only \$3.00 a day for 10 hours’ work chopping a white man’s cotton, somehow to do with the police—but they had not yet articulated, if they knew, the connections among all these things. And they had not, as well, articulated the connections of those things with their experiences of repression at home and in school. And so the very amorphous nature of the enemy was threatening to them.

The experience in the Freedom School was that patterns began to be seen, and patterns were real and could be dealt with. So the kids began to see two things at once: that the North was not real escape, and the South was not some vague white monster doomed irrationally to crush them. Simultaneously, they began to discover that they themselves could take action against the injustices—the specific injustices and the condition of injustice—which kept them unhappy and impotent.

Through the study of Negro History they began to have a sense of themselves as a people who could produce heroes. They saw in the story of Joseph Cinque of the *Amistad* a parallel to kinds of revolts that the Movement, as they began to learn about it, represented. They saw that Joseph Cinque, in leading a mutiny on that slave ship instead of asserting his will to freedom by jumping off the ship into the shark-waiting waters, was saying that freedom is something that belongs to life, not to death, and that a man has responsibility for bringing all his people to freedom, not just for his own escaping. Connections between then and now kept begin made—at first by the teachers, very soon by the students: who do you know that is like Joseph Cinque? How is Bob Moses like Moses in the Bible? How is he different? Why did Harriet Tubman go back into the South after she had gotten herself free into the North—and why so many times? And why doesn’t Mrs. Hamer stay in the North once she gets there to speak, since she doesn’t have a job on that man’s plantation any more, and since her life is in so much danger? And what do you think about Fredrick Douglass’s talking so straight to the President of the United States? And how does the picture of Jim Forman in the Emancipation Proclamation issue of *Ebony* suggest that same kind of straight talking? And who do you think the Movement is proving right—Booker T. Washington or W. E. B. DuBois? And why are the changes of gospel songs into Freedom Songs significant? What does “We Shall Overcome” really mean in terms of what we are doing, and what we can do?

Beginning to sense the real potency of organized Negroes in Mississippi, the kids in the Freedom Schools found an immediate area of concern in the Negro schools they attended or had dropped out of: the so-called “public” schools. They had grievances, but had, until drawn into the question asking, only been able to whine, or to accept passively, or to lash out by dropping out of

school or getting themselves expelled. Within the Freedom Schools, especially by comparing the Freedom Schools with the regular schools, they began to become articulate about what was wrong, and the way things should be instead: Why don't they do this at our school? Was the first question asked, and then there began to be answers, which led to further questions, such as, Why don't our teachers register to vote, if they presume to teach us about citizenship? And why can't our principal make his own decisions instead of having to follow the orders of the white superintendent? And why do we have no student government, or why doesn't the administration take the existing student government seriously?

This was the main question, which came also out of why there are no art classes, no language classes, why there is no equipment in the science labs, why the library is inadequate and inaccessible, why the classes are overcrowded. The main question was **WHY ARE WE NOT TAKEN SERIOUSLY?**—which is of course the question that the adults were asking about the city and county and state, and the question the Freedom Democratic Party asked—and for which the party demanded an answer—at the Convention.

The students were taken seriously in the Freedom Schools. They were encouraged to talk, and their talking was listened to. They were assigned to write, and their writing was read with attention to idea and style as well as to grammar. They were encouraged to sing, to dance, to draw, to play, to laugh. They were encouraged to think. And all of this was painful as well as releasing because to be taken seriously requires confrontation. And so Freedom School was painful for the kids who grew the most.

Tangibly, what was set in motion out of this experience of joy and pain was the thing the Mississippi staff had hoped could happen in Mississippi, but could not totally form. In the spring before the summer, SNCC in Mississippi had tried to organize a Mississippi Student Union, bringing together kids from all over the state. And there was good response, but not on the scale the MSU was soon to achieve out of the Freedom Schools. This summer the kids began to talk boycott of the schools, but to be able to discipline their thinking about boycott so that their action would not just be acting out their frustrations but careful, considered, programmed, revolutionary meaningful action along the lines of the Montgomery bus boycott and African revolutionary action. The kids were able to come together in the middle of the summer, in Meridian, and draw up a series of resolutions which said with terrible clarity what they felt about their world: what a house should be, what a school should be, what a job should be, what a city should be—even what the federal government should be. And they were able to ask why it was that the people did not have a voice, and to assert that their voices would be heard. The seriousness of their concern for a voice is reflected in the final statement of the list of grievances drawn up by the McComb Freedom School:

We are 12 Pike County high-school students. Until we are assured our parents will not suffer reprisals, until we are sure this list of grievances is met with serious consideration and good will, we will remain anonymous.

The McComb students are sounding this list of grievances to the school officials, the senators and the newspapers and the city officials and the President of the United States. Out into the world: look at me—I am no longer an invisible man.

And back again into themselves. Whoever the Freedom Schools touched they activated into confrontation, with themselves and with the world and back again. On one level, it was the white teacher saying to the Negro girl that nappy hair vs. “good hair” is not a valid distinction: that it is

a white man's distinction, and that the queens in Africa—in Senegal, Mali, Ghana—in Ethiopia—had nappy short hair! On another level, it was the Northern Negro student teacher saying to the kids yearning Northward that he himself had gone to an almost completely (or completely) segregated school, and that his home was in a ghetto. On another, it was a senior, suspended from the split-session summer school for participating in the movement and taking Freedom School academic courses (fully parallel) instead, saying of Robert Frost's "The Road Not Taken" that the man took the road that needed him more: "because it was grassy/and wanted wear/ . . . and that has made all the difference." On another level, it was the white and Negro Freedom School teachers sitting with the adults in the evening classes talking about what kids want and what kids deserve, and hearing the adults express some of their concern for their kids in the forming of a parents' group to support the kids' action against the schools. On still another, it was the junior-high-school kids in the community coming over in the evening to sit with the adults who were learning their alphabets, one kid to one adult, and both, and the staffs, crying with awe for the beauty and strangeness and naturalness of it. And on all levels, it was the whites, the northerners, listening to the Mississippi Negroes, reading what they wrote, taking them seriously, and learning from them.

Visible results of Freedom Summer include the kids' drawings on the wall of Freedom Schools and COFO officers all over the state, as well as kids' applications for scholarships (National Scholarship Service and Fund for Negro Students) and even more applications for the Tougaloo Work Study program, which commits them to staying to work in Mississippi. In addition, there is the real probability that the Negro teachers in the regular schools—the teachers who have to sign an oath not to participate in civil rights activities or try to vote—have, this first week of school, begun to experience for the first time in their lives the challenge from a student that is not adolescent testing or insolent acting out but serious demanding that in truth there is freedom and that he will have the truth!

Most significantly, the result of the summer's Freedom Schools is seen in the continuation of the Freedom Schools into the fall, winter, spring, summer plans of the Mississippi Project. Some project directors, who had been in Mississippi since 1961 during the slow, sometimes depressing, always dangerous, serious, tiring work of voter registration, first thought of the Freedom Schools as a frill, detrimental to the basic effort. At best, they were a front for the real activity. But Freedom Schools were not just, as the same project directors came to concede, a place where kids could be inducted into the Movement, a convenient source of canvassers. They were something else, and in realizing this the dubious project directors were themselves transformed by the Freedom Schools. They were, instead of anything superficial, and will go on to be, the experience—not the place—in which people, because we needed them, emerged as discussion leaders, as teachers, as organizers, as speakers, as friends, as people. I know this is so because in leaving the Freedom School in Indianola, the county seat of Sunflower County where the Movement had been resisted for three years, and where, when we came in, the people did not know how to cross arm over arm to sing "We Shall Overcome," I learned for the first time in my life that with kids you love to disconnect is to suffer. So the teachers were transformed, too.

The transformation of Mississippi is possible because the transformation of people has begun. And if it can happen in Mississippi, it can happen all over the South. The original hope of the Freedom School plan was that there would be about 1,000 students in the state coming to the informal discussion groups and other sessions. It turned out that by the end of the summer the number was closer to 3,000, and that the original age expectation of 16-17-18-year-olds had to be revised to include preschool children and all the way up to 70-year-old people, all anxious to

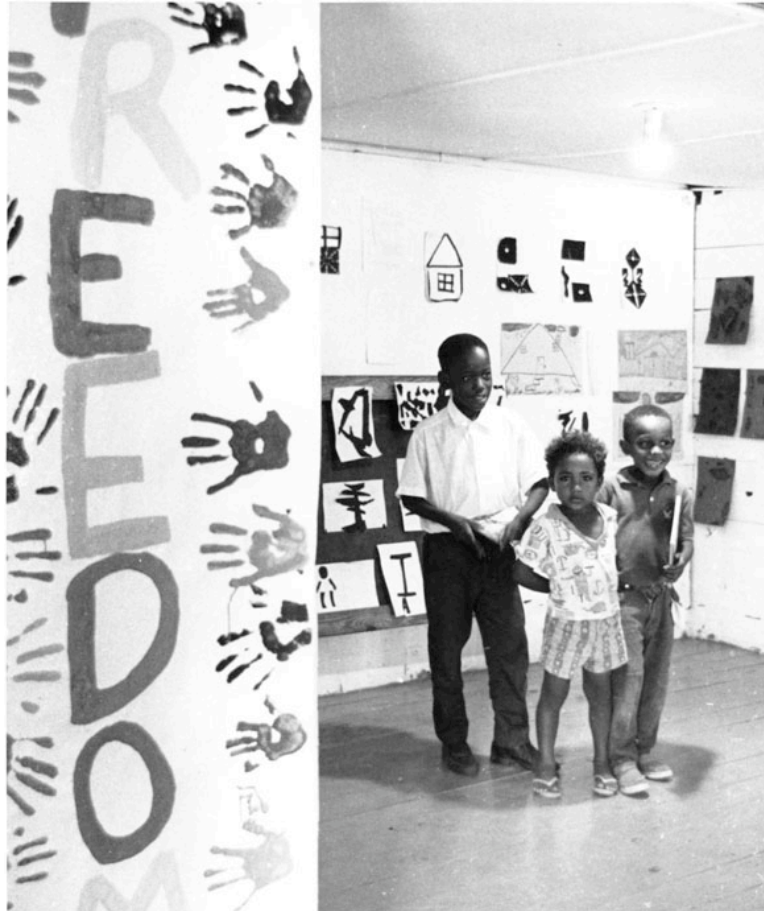
learn about how to be Free. The subjects ranged from the originally anticipated Negro History, Mississippi Now, and black-white relations to include typing, foreign languages, and other forms of tutoring. In fact, these aspects of the program were so successful that the continuation of the Freedom Schools into the regular academic year will involve a full-scale program of tutorials and independent study as well as exploration in greater intensity of the problems raised in the summer sessions, and longer-range work with art, music, and drama.

To think of kids in Mississippi expressing emotion on paper with crayons and in abstract shapes rather than taking knives to each other; to think of their writing and performing plays about the Negro experience in America rather than just sitting in despairing lethargy within that experience; to think of their organizing and running all by themselves a Mississippi Student Union, whose program is not dances and fundraising but direct action to alleviate serious grievances; to think, even, of their being willing to come to school *after school*, day after day, when their whole association with school had been at least uncomfortable and dull and at worst tragically crippling—to think of these things is to think that a total transformation of the young people in an underdeveloped country can take place, and to dare to dream that it can happen all over the South. There are programs now, as well as dreams, and materials, and results to learn from. And it may well be that the very staffs of the Freedom Schools in Louisiana and Georgia, etc., will be the kids who were just this past summer students themselves in the Freedom Schools in Mississippi, and discovered themselves there.

Liz Fusco, Coordinator, COFO Freedom Schools

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*“African-American children in exhibit area”*

### ***EXAMPLES OF STUDENT WORK***

*[Editors’ Note: The following documents were written by Freedom School students. In retyping these documents for this text, no corrections were made in the spelling or grammar. The writing appears below as it was in the originals. The only change is the names of the students have been reduced to initials.]*

#### **Excerpts from the collection “What the Summer Project Has Meant”**

*What the Summer Project Has Meant* by [ZH]

The Summer Project Ment So Much to Me. I Met New people.

They taught us New things about our people, things that we hadnt realized about. The life of famous colored people.

We also learned about writing different letter, that was

a big help. What I liked very much was ~~the~~ learning the

meaning of lots of words. Words that I had been over but not nowing the real meaning.

The project ment much to me discussing health, food that prevent different diseases. And if you dont get enough of food containing these vitamins, you may come in conact with these diseases. The Library means a great deal of help. We learn steps on how to use the library, which was very important. All of the SNCC student was just what we needed. I pray that they come back again.

*On Jobs* by [LB]

Our problem today is un-employment.

I think the government should bring some kind of factory in the State of Mississippi and someone from the Northern Stats should operate it. I think a rug factory would be fine for those not getting welfare assistance. We thats getting Welfare assistance cant get a job.

### **Excerpts from Freedom School Newspapers**

#### ***PALMER'S CROSSING FREEDOM NEWS,***

Priest's Creek July 23, 1964 number one St John's

##### *The Darkness of the Negro Students*

Some of the Negro students have been complaining about their teachers. They said their teachers do not give any information about the freeing of their people. The information given to them was false. They teach only what the white man wants us to hear. We have been taught that the white man was responsible for the abolishing of slavery, but that is false. What about the Negro abolitionists?

We have been taught that when the Negroes were free they were helpless. But this is false because they helped themselves by building houses and raising crops.

The reason for my coming out of darkness is by attending Freedom Schools. At this school both sides of the story are told.

[LC]

##### *In Freedom Schools*

I like to go to Freedom School. You would like it too. If you want to come and don't have a way, let us know.

I think we should all have our equal rights. We Negroes have been beaten, but we will never turn back until we get what belongs to us.

We just want what belongs to us. We don't want anything else. I think we as Negroes ought to have the right to vote for justice, equal rights, freedom, jobs, we need better books to read. In the stores uptown and down here we have to pay tax. That is a crying shame.

God is looking down on people now. We try to hid things form people, but we can't hide things from God. We pay tax. I think we should have a right to vote. All of our colored men are getting beaten and put in jail. This unfair I think, don't you?

[RMC] age 11.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE *By the*  
*Freedom School Students of*  
*St. John's Methodist Church,*  
*Palmer's Crossing, Hattiesburg, Miss.*

In this course of human events, it has become necessary for the Negro people to break away from the customs which have made it very difficult for the Negro to get his God-given rights. We, as citizens of Mississippi, do hereby state that all people should have the right to petition, to assemble, and to use public places. We also have the right to life, liberty, and to seek happiness.

The government has no right to make or to change laws without the consent of the people. No government has the right to take the law into its own hands. All people as citizens have the right to impeach the government when their rights are being taken away.

All voters elect persons to the government. Everyone must vote to elect the person of his choice; so we hereby state that all persons of twenty-one years of age, whether back, white or yellow, have the right to elect the persons of their choice; and if these persons do not carry out the will of the people, they have the right to alter or abolish the government.

The Negro does not have the right to petition the government for a redress of these grievances:

For equal opportunity.  
For better schools and equipment.  
For better recreation facilities.  
For more public libraries.  
For schools for the mentally ill.  
For more and better senior colleges.  
For better roads in Negro communities.  
For training schools in the State of Mississippi.  
For more Negro policemen.  
For more guarantee of a fair circuit clerk.  
For integration in colleges and schools.

The government has made it possible for the white man to have a mock trial in the case of a Negro's death.

The government has refused to make laws for the public good.  
The government has used police brutality.  
The government has imposed taxes upon us without representation.  
The government has refused to give Negroes the right to go into public places.  
The government has marked our registration forms unfairly.

We, therefore, the Negroes of Mississippi assembled, appeal to the government of the state, that no man is free until all men are free. We do hereby declare independence from the unjust laws of Mississippi which conflict with the United States Constitution.

***The FREEDOM CARRIER***

Vol. I No. I      Greenwood, Mississippi July 16, 1964

Greenwood Grumbles, Speaking of Freedom

By Editor C.T

We feel free when we can do as we please. We do not like it if anyone tries to stop us. Even a tiny baby will fly into a rage if his hands are held so that he cannot move them. This is not exactly love of freedom, for the baby has nothing in particular that he wants to do with his hands. It is more nearly hatred of restraint. But psychologists tell us that it is one of the few qualities found in all children from birth, and it is probably the basis for man's love of freedom.

Animals too often seem to want more freedom than they have. The dog strains at the leash to run free. The pet bird flies out of his cage when given the opportunity. Wild animals in zoos pace their cages hour by hour, ready to escape at the first chance. These animals are probably better cared for and fed than they would be if they were free. But animals, like men, crave the freedom to do as they choose.

The Negroes in Mississippi are fed up with the life here. We feel that it is time something was done to stop the killings or murders, the prejudice, the mistreatment of Negroes here. Freedom is a very precious thing to any race of people, but in a nation that is supposed to be free and where oppression still exists, something really has to be done. As our forefathers fought for this nation to be free, we also say to our oppressors "Give us freedom, or give us death."

July 23<sup>rd</sup>, Thursday***FREEDOM STAR***

Published by the students of the Meridian Freedom School

**I AM A NEGRO**

I am a Negro and proud of its color too,  
 If you were a Negro wouldn't you?  
 I am glad of just what I am now  
 To be and to do things I know how.  
 I'm glad to be a Negro so happy and gay  
 To grow stronger day by day.  
 I am a Negro and I want to be free as any other child,  
 To wander about the house and the woods and be wild.  
 I want to be Free, Free, Free.

Rosalyn W.

**HOW I SEE MYSELF AT "21" OR OVER**

My aim in life is to be a lawyer. There are not enough Negro Lawyers in Mississippi defending their fellow brothers and sisters. Some people living in Mississippi leave after or before they finish school. I do not see myself in some fancy mansion nor do I see myself living in the slums of places. I just want to live in a decent home living in the neighborhood with people. When I say people I mean both black and white. I do not believe in Segregation. I want to help people. To stop this police brutality. I see myself as a decent, respectable citizen. I want to be a

nice person. And I would like for people to treat me the same way. If I do be a lawyer or whatever my profession will be, I will not marry until I finish school, grade and law school, and have a job. I mean a good job. Not babysitting and house keeping.

No I do not plan to leave Mississippi. To help others. I want to look as well as be respectful. Although looks don't mean everything. It's what you know. It's the work that you do and your aim in life. If you lead a good clean life, people will respect you no matter how you look.

With this closing I will say that "I will strive to do the best that I can."

Anonymous

## ***THE FREEDOM SCHOOLS***

### ***Concept and Organization***

Staughton Lynd

Professor Staughton Lynd was formerly Chairman of the History Department at Spelman College in Atlanta. He directed the Freedom School project in Mississippi last summer and now is on the faculty at Yale.

People sometimes ask me how to start a Freedom School. This question seems almost funny. Few of us who planned the curriculum and administrative structure of the Mississippi Freedom Schools had any experience in Northern Freedom Schools. And in any case, our approach to curriculum was to have no curriculum and our approach to administrative structure was not to have any (I will explain this in a moment). So my answer to the question: "How do you start a Freedom School?" is, "I don't know." And if people ask, "What are the Freedom Schools like?" again I have to answer, "I don't know." I was an itinerant bureaucrat. I saw a play in Holly Springs, an adult class in Indianola, a preschool mass meeting in McComb, which were exciting. But who can presume to enclose in a few words what happened last summer when 2,500 youngsters from Mississippi and 250 youngsters from the North encountered each other, but not as students and teachers, in a learning experience that was not a school?

There was one educational experience for which I did most initial planning and which I took part in personally: the Freedom School Convention at Meridian on the weekend of August 7-9. Perhaps because this was the one "class" which I "taught", the Convention has loomed larger and larger in my mind as I have reflected on the summer. If I were to start a Freedom School now (and we are about to start one in New Haven), I would suggest: Begin with a Freedom School Convention and let that provide your curriculum.

The Freedom School Convention went a step beyond the thinking which took place before the summer in its implications for the administration and curriculum of a school "stayed on freedom." Originally, we planned to have two residential schools for high school students who in the judgment of COFO staff had most leadership potential, with a network of twenty day schools feeding into them. Sometime in April it became apparent that sites for residential schools would not be forthcoming, and if they did, there would be no money to rent them. And we realized, after a few painful days, that this was a good thing. It meant that teachers would live within Negro communities rather than on sequestered campuses. It meant that we would have to ask ministers for the use of church basements as schools. In short, it meant we would run a school system without buildings, equipment or money (which we did: less than \$2,000 passed through my office in Jackson in the course of the summer, about half of it for film rental).

It meant, too, that each school would be on its own, succeeding or failing by improvisation without much help from a central point. In my own mind the image which kept recurring was that of the guerrilla army which "swims in the sea" of the people among whom it lives. Clearly, whether we swam or drowned depended on the naked reaction of Negro children and their parents. No apparatus of compulsion or material things could shield us from their verdict. At the Oxford orientation, I kept repeating that when the Freedom School teachers got off the bus and found no place to sleep, despite previous assurances, and no place to teach, because the minister had gotten scared; when they were referred to an old lady of the local church for help in finding lodging, and to a youngster hanging around the COFO office for help in finding students—as they

did these things, they would be building their school, their teaching would have begun. After about a week we knew that somehow, some way it was working. We had expected 1,000 students at the most; I can remember the night when I wrote on a blackboard in the Jackson COFO office: “1,500 students in Freedom School. *Yippee!*”

The Freedom School Convention went a step beyond this. For once the Freedom School coordinators (our word for “principals”) approved the idea of a young peoples’ mock convention, coinciding with the statewide convention of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, the young people took over. *They became the administrators.* About a dozen students from all over the state met in Jackson to plan the convention (out of this group, incidentally, came a new impetus for the Mississippi Student Union). The Meridian Freedom School agreed to play host to the Convention, partly because Michael Schwerner, James Chaney and Andrew Goodman had been killed attempting to start a Freedom School near Meridian, partly because Meridian possessed the palace of the Freedom School circuit, a three-story Baptist seminary which could easily house 100 delegates. Meridian young people, therefore, took on the complicated task of finding lodging and arranging transportation. The planning committee worked out a program. Essentially it was workshops each morning, plenary session each afternoon, and a Freedom School play Saturday night. Joyce Brown of McComb and Roscoe Jones of Meridian were chosen as the Convention’s principal officers.

And not only did the youngsters plan the Convention. At the Convention, there was a noticeable change in tone between the first and second days. By Sunday, these teenagers were rejecting the advice of adults whether in workshops or plenary sessions, for they had discovered they could do it themselves. Beyond the convention one could discern still one more stage in the development of academic self-government. A resolution of the convention pledged the support of all the schools to a Freedom School in the Delta, planning to boycott the public school there. Here was a program not only executed by the youngsters, but initiated by them. The curriculum of next summer’s Freedom Schools, it has been suggested, may be built around preparation for a statewide boycott.

Indeed the Freedom School Convention’s implications for curriculum were more revolutionary than its implications for administration. The curriculum presented to the teachers at Oxford had been drafted by Noel Day. Essentially it was a series of questions, beginning with the students’ most immediate experience of housing, employment, and education, and working out to such questions as: What is it like for Negroes who go North? What are the myths of society about the Negro’s past? What in Mississippi keeps us from getting the things we want? Beyond this, teachers were given some fragmentary written material on Negro history, and the advice to emphasize oral rather than written instruction. We were afraid that as a predominantly white group of teachers we would be rejected. The fear was unnecessary; but it helped us to break away from the conventional paraphernalia of education, to remember that education is about a meeting between people. We said at Oxford: If you want to begin the summer by burning the curriculum we have given you, go ahead! We realized that our own education had been dry and irrelevant all too often, and we determined to teach as we ourselves wished we had been taught.

But ideas can run only a certain distance beyond experience; as in administration, so in curriculum, we had a lot to learn. We learned that *students can and should make their own curriculum.* How? Simple. Already in March at a curriculum planning conference in New York City it was my belief that the curriculum should be built around the political platform of COFO’s Congressional candidates. Mississippi suggested something more. *Curriculum should be built around the political platform the students themselves create.* For this was what the Freedom

School Convention was. Our emphasis at this convention was not (like that of the FDP) on people, but on program. We sought to provide a model for how people can democratically put together a political platform. The students of each Freedom School asked: If we could elect a mayor (or a state legislator, or a senator) what laws would we ask him to pass? Having drawn up a program in this way, each school sent delegates to Meridian, where in eight workshops—on public accommodations, on housing, on education, etc.—they put together the twenty-odd platforms of the different schools, and reported the results to the plenary session.

I think now it would have been better if the schools had begun with such a convention, and if the statewide program brought back to each school by its delegates had then become the curriculum for the summer.

Before presenting the program of the Mississippi Freedom School convention, let me try to convey a little of the feel of the occasion. Delegates were to arrive in Meridian the evening of Friday, August 7. On Thursday I drove up from Jackson with Luis Perez, who was trying to start a Freedom School in Neshoba County, where the three men had been killed. The housing committee placed us in a home just across the street from the Meridian Freedom School. It had no bathroom of any kind. At one in the morning we were awakened by Mark and Betty Levy, the able and indefatigable coordinators of the school, and members of the student planning committee. This was the week that the bodies of the three missing men were found. The Negro community of Meridian, we learned, had planned a funeral Friday night for James Chaney. Groups of silent marchers would leave a number of churches at dusk and walk to the church where the service would be held. This was just the time when delegates to the Freedom School Convention would be arriving. There might very well be a riot in response to the funeral. In the shadowy office of the Freedom School we tried to decide what our responsibility was to the delegates and their parents. We decided that they should come and participate in the funeral if they wished.

They came. As I drove groups of late-arriving delegates from the bus station to the Freedom School, we passed the lines of silent marchers converging at the church. Some wore dark suits and ties. Some did not. It made no difference for all one noticed was their faces.

Saturday morning the Convention began. Over the front of the room was a large hand painted sign: "Freedom Is A Struggle." At one side was another neatly-lettered sign with the times and places of workshops and plenary sessions. At lunch we gathered around Roscoe Jones and sang and sang. That evening the Holly Springs Freedom School presented "Seeds of Freedom," a play based on the life of Medgar Evers. At the end, the girl playing Mrs. Evers said she would carry on her husband's struggle, and each member of the cast ("students" and "teachers") told why they had come to Freedom School. Then the Free Southern Theater, a group of professional quality, organized by SNCC's John O'Neal and Gilbert Moses (no relation to Bob), presented Martin Duberman's *In White America*. It too had an interpolated ending. Susan Wahman, wife of Tom Wahman who helped me with Freedom School administration, spoke the words which Rita Schwerner had said to President Johnson: "I want my husband."

Half a program had been adopted Saturday afternoon, the rest Sunday afternoon, after a second round of morning workshops. A. Philip Randolph addressed the youngsters on the need for economic as well as political programs, something their program showed that they already knew. Jim Forman, SNCC's Executive Secretary talked about the students of Africa who went on to higher education but came back to their people to put this education to work. Bob Moses, characteristically, asked the Convention questions. Did they want to carry on Freedom School in this winter? Why? Did they want Freedom School *after* public school, or *instead* of public



school? Why? What about the problem of graduating from an unaccredited school? Most of the delegates favored returning to public school and attempting to improve them (here was the seed of the idea of boycott).

At the end of Sunday afternoon all were exhausted, as always at conventions. We struggled on to the end of the program. With a joyful shout, the program was declared adopted. Then one young man asked for the floor. "Wait," he said, "I move that copies of this program be sent to every member of the Mississippi legislature, to President Johnson, and to the Secretary General of the United Nations [tumultuous applause], and—wait, wait—a copy to the Library of Congress for its permanent records [pandemonium]."

He was asking that the program of the Mississippi Freedom School Convention be taken seriously. I think it should be. The Civil Rights Movement has been strangely neglectful of program. Who remembers the specific demands of the March on Washington, for instance? What planks were advocated by the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party? It is true enough that the central demand was in the one case for a civil rights bill, and in the other for seating at the Democratic Convention; and this was as it should have been. But in the not very distant future candidates running for Congressional office will be real, not mock, candidates, and will have to declare themselves intelligently on a variety of issues. These candidates may come out of Freedom Schools. If we do not take their program seriously, it means not taking their ideas seriously. If we do not take their ideas seriously, we should ask ourselves what the Schools are for.

Here, at any rate, are excerpts from the program of the Mississippi Freedom School Convention:

Meridian, Miss.  
Aug. 8-9, 1964

#### PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS

1. *We resolve that the Public Accommodations and Public Facilities sections of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 be enforced.*
2. *We support the right of the Negro people and their white supporters to test the Civil Rights Act via demonstrations such as sit-ins. We are not urging a bloodbath through this means; we are simply demanding our Constitutional right to public assembly and seeking to test the federal government's position.*

#### HOUSING

1. *Be it resolved: That the federal government provide money for new housing developments in the state. Anyone could buy those houses with a down payment and low monthly rate. There must be absolutely no discrimination. The federal government should take action if this law is not complied with.*

#### EDUCATION

1. *Better facilities in all schools. These would include textbooks, laboratories, air-conditioning, heating, recreation, and lunch rooms.*
2. *Low-fee adult classes for better jobs.*
3. *That the school year consist of nine (9) consecutive months.*

4. *All schools be integrated and equal throughout the country.*
5. *Academic freedom for teachers and students.*
6. *Teachers be able to join any political organization to fight for civil rights without fear of being fired.*

#### HEALTH

1. *Each school should have fully developed health, first-aid, and physical education programs. These programs should be assisted by at least one registered nurse.*
2. *All medical facilities should have both integrated staff and integrated facilities for all patients.*
3. *Free medical care should be provided for all those who are not able to pay the cost of hospital bills.*

#### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

1. *Whereas the policy of apartheid in the Republic of South Africa is detrimental to all the people of that country and against the concepts of equality and justice, we ask that the United States impose economic sanctions in order to end this policy.*
2. *The United States should stop supporting dictatorships in other countries, and should support that government which the majority of the people want.*

#### THE PLANTATION SYSTEM

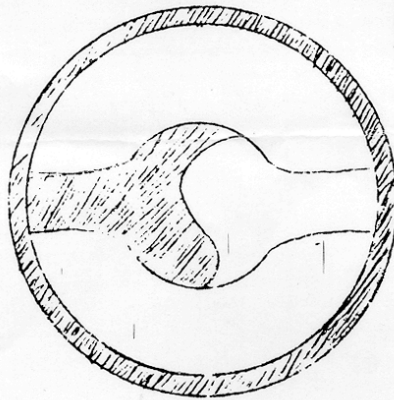
1. *The federal government should force plantation owners to build and maintain fair tenant housing.*
2. *In cases where the plantation farmers are not being adequately paid according to the Minimum Wage Law, the government should intervene on behalf of the farmers in a suit against the plantation owner.*

# 1964 PLATFORM

of the

## MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM SCHOOL CONVENTION

AUGUST 6<sup>th</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> 8<sup>th</sup>  
MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI



**1964 PLATFORM OF THE MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM SCHOOL CONVENTION**

AUGUST 6TH, 7TH, 8TH, MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI

**PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

1. We resolve that the Public Accommodations and Public Facilities sections of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 be enforced.
2. We demand new and better recreation facilities for all.
3. We support the right of the Negro people and their white supporters to test the Civil Rights Act via demonstrations such as sit-ins. We are not urging a blood-bath through this means; we are simply demanding our Constitutional right to public assembly and seeking to test the Federal government's position.
4. Conversion of public accommodations into private clubs should be treated as a violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

**HOUSING**

The home, being the center of a child's life as well as the center of a family's, must have certain facilities in order for it to be a home and not just a building in which one eats, sleeps, and prepares to leave for the rest of the day. Therefore, be it resolved:

1. That there be an equal-opportunity-to-buy-law which permits all persons to purchase a home in any section of town in which he can afford to live.
2. That a rent control law be passed and that one should pay according to the condition of the house.
3. That a building code for home construction be established which includes the following minimum housing requirements:
  - a. A complete bathroom unit
  - b. A kitchen sink
  - c. A central heating system
  - d. Insulated walls and ceiling
  - e. A laundry room and pantry space
  - f. An adequate wiring system providing for at least three electrical outlets in the living room and kitchen, and at least two such outlets in the bedroom and bath
  - g. At least a quarter of an acre of land per building lot
  - h. A basement and attic.
4. That zoning regulations be enacted and enforced to keep undesirable and unsightly industries and commercial operations away from residential neighborhoods.
5. That slums be cleared, and a low cost federal housing project be established to house these people.
6. That federal aid be given for the improvement of houses, with long term low interest loans.
7. That the Federal government provide money for new housing developments in the state.

Anyone could buy these houses with a down payment and low monthly rate. There must be absolutely no discrimination. The federal government should take action if this law is not complied with.
8. That a federal law make sure that the projects are integrated and that they are run fairly.
9. That there be lower taxes on improvements in the houses so that more people will fix up their house.

10. That the federal government buy and sell land at low rates to people who want to build there.

### EDUCATION

In an age where machines are rapidly replacing manual labor, job opportunities and economic security increasingly require higher levels of education. We therefore demand:

1. Better facilities in all schools. These would include textbooks, laboratories, air conditioning, heating, recreation, and lunch rooms.
2. A broader curriculum including vocational subjects and foreign languages.
3. Low fee adult classes for better jobs.
4. That the school year consist of nine (9) consecutive months.
5. Exchange programs and public kindergarten.
6. Better qualified teachers with salaries according to qualification.
7. Forced retirement (women 62, men 65).
8. Special schools for mentally retarded and treatment and care of cerebral palsy victims.
9. That taxpayers' money not be used to provide private schools.
10. That all schools be integrated and equal throughout the country.
11. Academic freedom for teachers and students.
12. That teachers be able to join any political organization to fight for Civil Rights without fear of being fired.
13. That teacher brutality be eliminated.

### HEALTH

1. Each school should have fully developed health, first aid, and physical education programs. These programs should be assisted by at least one registered nurse.
2. Mobile units, chest x-rays semi-annually and a check-up at least once a year by licensed doctors, the local health department or a clinic should be provided by the local or state government.
3. All medical facilities should have both integrated staff and integrated facilities for all patients.
4. Mental health facilities should be integrated and better staffed.
5. Homes for the aged should be created.
6. Free medical care should be provided for all those who are not able to pay the cost of hospital bills.
7. We demand state and local government inspection of all health facilities.
8. All doctors should be paid by skill, not by race.
9. Titles should be given to the staff.
10. The federal government should help the organization pay the salaries of workers.
11. All patients should be addressed properly.
12. We actively seek the abolition of any sterilization act which serves as punishment, voluntary or involuntary, for any offense.
13. In a reasonable time we seek the establishment of a center for the treatment and care of cerebral palsy victims.

### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

1. The United States should stop supporting dictatorships in other countries and should support that government which the majority of the people want.

2. Whereas the policy of apartheid in the Republic of South Africa is detrimental to all the people of that country and against the concepts of equality and justice, we ask that the United States impose economic sanctions in order to end this policy.
3. We ask that there be an equitable balance between the domestic and foreign economic and social support provided by our country.

#### FEDERAL AID

1. We demand that a Public Works Program be set up by the federal government to create jobs for the unemployed.
2. Because of discrimination in the past, we demand preferential treatment for the Negro in the granting of federal aid in education and training programs until integration is accomplished.
3. To help fight unemployment, we demand that federal funds be lent communities to set up industries and whole towns which shall be publicly owned by the communities, for example: textile and paper mills, stores, schools, job relocation programs for those put out of work by automation, job retraining, recreational facilities, banks, hospitals.
4. We demand that social security benefits should be given according to need, and not according to how much one earned previously. In addition, we demand guaranteed income of at least \$3,000.00 annually for every citizen.
5. The federal government should give aid to students who wish to study for the professions and who do not have the necessary funds.
6. We feel that federal aid in Mississippi is not being distributed equally among the people. Therefore we adopt Title VI of the Civil Rights Law which deals with federal aid. We demand federal agents appointed to Mississippi expressly for this purpose. We demand that action be taken against the state of Mississippi so that this aid may be distributed fairly.
7. We demand that the federal government divert part of the funds now used for defense into additional federal aid appropriations.
8. We demand that the federal government refuse to contract with corporations that employ non-union labor, engage in unfair labor practices, or practice racial discrimination.

#### JOB DISCRIMINATION

1. We demand that the federal government immediately open to Negroes all employment opportunities and recruitment programs under their auspices, such as in post offices, Veterans Hospitals, and defense bases.
2. The fair employment section (Title VII) of the 1964 Civil Rights law be immediately and fully enforced.
3. The guarantee of fair employment be extended fully to all aspects of labor, particularly training programs.
4. We encourage the establishment of more unions in Mississippi, to attract more industry to the state.
5. We will encourage and support more strikes for better jobs and adequate pay. During the strikes the employers should be enjoined from having others replace the striking workers.
6. Vocational institutions must be established for high school graduates and dropouts.
7. The federal Minimum Wage law be extended to include all workers especially agriculture and domestic workers.
8. Cotton planting allotments to be made on the basis of family size.
9. We want an extension of the Manpower Retraining Program.

10. Whenever a factory is automated, management must find new jobs for the workers.
11. Workers should be paid in accordance with their qualifications and the type of work done.

#### THE PLANTATION SYSTEM

1. The federal government should force plantation owners to build and maintain fair tenant housing.
2. In cases where the plantation farmers are not being adequately paid according to the Minimum Wage Law, the government should intervene on behalf of the farmers in suit against the plantation owner.

#### CIVIL LIBERTIES

1. Citizens of Mississippi should be entitled to employ out-of-state lawyers.
2. Section Two of the Fourteenth Amendment should be enforced, specifically in Mississippi and other Southern States, until the voter registration practices are changed.
3. The citizens should have the privilege of exercising their Constitutional rights
  - a. to assemble,
  - b. to petition,
  - c. to freedom of the press,
  - d. to freedom of speechin such ways as picketing, passing out leaflets and demonstrations. We oppose all laws that deprive citizens of the above rights.
4. We want the abolition of the House Unamerican Activities Committee because it deprives citizens of their Constitutional rights.
5. We resolve that the Freedom Movement should accept people regardless of religion, race, political views or national origin if they comply with the rules of the movement.

#### LAW ENFORCEMENT

1. We want qualified Negroes appointed to the police force in large numbers. We want them to be able to arrest anyone breaking the law, regardless of race, creed or color.
2. All police must possess warrants when they demand to enter a house and search the premises. In the absence of a search warrant, the police must give a reasonable explanation of what they are looking for. In any case, with or without a warrant, no damage should be done unnecessarily to property, and if damage is done, it should be paid for.
3. A national committee should be set up to check police procedures, to insure the safety of people in jail: their food, sleeping and health facilities; to protect them from mobs, and to see that no violence is done to them.
4. All cases against law enforcement agencies or involving civil rights should be tried in federal courts.
5. Law enforcement officers should provide protection against such hate groups as the KKK. Police and public officials should not belong to any group that encourages or practices violence.

#### CITY MAINTENANCE

1. The city should finance paving and widening of the streets and installing of drain systems in them.
2. Sidewalks must be placed along all streets.

3. A better system of garbage disposal, including more frequent pickups, must be devised.
4. Streets should be adequately lighted.
5. We oppose nuclear testing in residential areas.

#### VOTING

1. The poll tax must be eliminated.
2. Writing and interpreting of the Constitution is to be eliminated.
3. We demand further that registration procedures be administered without discrimination, and that all intimidation of prospective voters be ended through federal supervision and investigation by the FBI and Justice Department.
4. We want guards posted at ballot boxes during counting of votes.
5. The minimum age for voting should be lowered to 18 years.
6. We seek for legislation to require the county registrar or one of his deputies to keep the voter registration books open five days a week except during holidays, and open noon hours and early evening so that they would be accessible to day workers. Registrars should be required by law to treat all people seeking to register equally.

#### DIRECT ACTION

1. To support Ruleville, we call for a state-wide school demonstration, urging teachers to vote, and asking for better, integrated schools.
2. We support nonviolence, picketing and demonstrations.



## FREEDOM SCHOOL CURRICULUM



*"Sandra Adickes teaches Freedom School class"*

### **TABLE OF CONTENTS AND A NOTE TO THE TEACHER**

Because material trickled in until the very last moment, the actual contents of the curriculum do not correspond exactly with the "materials" listed at the beginning of each unit in the citizenship curriculum. The following Table of Contents describes what is actually in the curriculum. You can make corrections of the "materials" lists if you wish. . . . Items marked (P) are included only in the coordinators' copies of the curriculum.

Table of Contents

A Note to the Teacher

Part I: Academic Curriculum

Reading and Writing Skills,

Mathematics

*[Inserted by Editors:]* Science

Part II: Citizenship Curriculum

Unit I The Negro in Mississippi

Case studies: Statistics on education, housing, income and employment and health

The South as an Underdeveloped Country (P)

*[Inserted by Editors:]* The Poor in America

Unit II The Negro in the North

Case studies: Triple Revolution  
Chester, PA; Cambridge, MD; NYC School crisis (P)

Unit III Myths about the Negro

Case studies: Guide to Negro History  
In White America (P)  
*[Inserted by Editors:]* Negro History Addendum I  
*[Inserted by Editors:]* Negro History Addendum II  
*[Inserted by Editors:]* Negro History Study Questions  
*[Inserted by Editors:]* Development of Negro Power

Unit IV The Power Structure

Case studies: Mississippi Power Structure  
Power of the Dixiecrats (P)  
*[Inserted by Editors:]* Nazi Germany

Unit V Poor whites, poor Negroes and their fears

Case studies: Hazard, KY (P)

Unit VI Soul Things and Material Things

Case studies: Statements of Discipline of Nonviolent Movements

Unit VII The Movement      Part 1, Freedom rides and sit-ins;  
                                          Part 2, COFO's Political Program

Case studies: Readings in Nonviolence  
Rifle Squads or the Beloved Community  
Voter registration Laws in Mississippi  
Civil Rights Bill  
*[Inserted by Editors:]* Charles Remsberg, "Behind the Cotton Curtain"  
*[Inserted by Editors:]* Nonviolence in American History  
*[Inserted by Editors:]* Teaching Material for Unit VII, Part 2

## Part III: Recreational and Artistic Curriculum

## A NOTE TO THE TEACHER

As you know, you will be teaching in a non-academic sort of setting; probably the basement of a church. Your students will be involved in voter registration activity after school. They may not come to school regularly. We will be able to provide some books, hopefully, some films, certainly some interesting guest speakers—yet other than these things you will have few materials apart from those you and your fellow teachers have brought.

In such a setting a "curriculum" must necessarily be flexible. We cannot provide lesson plans. All we can do is give you some models and suggestions which you can fall back on when you wish. You, your colleagues, and your students are urged to shape your own curriculum in the

light of the teachers' skills, the students' interests, and the resources of the particular community in which your school is located.

The curriculum suggestions which follow fall into three parts, corresponding to three blocks of time into which you may wish to divide your school day. First come some ideas about the presentation of conventional academic subjects: English, mathematics, and the like.

We think such instruction is likely to be most fruitful at the beginning of the school day, when students are fresh. But we urge you, whenever possible, to use as materials for instruction in these subjects the actual problems of communication and analysis which the student encounters in his daily life, e.g. how to write a leaflet, how to calculate the number of eligible voters in a community.

Most of the material in this curriculum belongs to the citizenship curriculum, which you may want to present during the second half of the morning on a typical day. We assume that in this, as in all other phases of your teaching, you will use an informal, question-and-answer method. Hence, you will find that the material on citizenship is divided into seven units, each of which springs from a question, and each of which leads on to another question, which forms the next unit.

A large number of case studies have been provided to help you make the citizenship curriculum as concrete and vivid as possible. Many people, in many organizations, have taken part in preparing these case studies. If you disagree with the viewpoint of a particular case study, or of some part of the citizenship curriculum, please feel free to approach the problem in your own way.

Finally, we have some suggestions about the artistic, recreational and cultural activities which we think you may want to schedule in the afternoon, when it's hot. Don't neglect this phase of the curriculum. The comradeship formed on the ball field or in the group singing may be the basis of your relationship with a student.

***PART I: ACADEMIC CURRICULUM: READING AND WRITING*****Introduction**

It would seem advisable that, considering the special conditions under which the Freedom Schools will operate, some form of the team approach be adopted, to divide responsibility, yet retain an integrated educational approach to the student. The teachers should plan the activities together, so that each subject area correlates and reinforces the others. If, for example, the group of students plan to canvass, the language arts phase of the program could concentrate on an appropriate verbal skill, the social studies area could be devoted to the study of the population to be canvassed in terms of economic, social, religious factors and the implications of those factors, the math area could be given over to statistical breakdowns, charts, etc. (This example is a little advanced.) Or, if the students were to publicize a mass meeting, the language arts phase could study the considerations involved in writing persuasive material, the arts and crafts programs could make posters and leaflets, etc. One other advantage of the team approach is that, since students are first of all individuals, a group of teachers working in concert can serve their separate, special needs better. It is not likely that there will be sufficient time or variety of personnel to organize the staff in a detailed manner, but some version of the team concept could probably be implemented.

It is very important that there be cohesiveness and cooperation among the Freedom School personnel. Hopefully, before the opening of each school (there will probably be a week to prepare), the staff can make plans and agree on overall aims and apportion individual responsibilities. Frequent planning conferences after school begins are essential.

The value of the Freedom Schools will derive mainly from what the teachers are able to elicit from the students in terms of comprehension and expression of their experience. The curriculum should derive from the students' background, and all aspects of classroom activity should be an outgrowth of their experiences. The classroom groups will be small; the social interaction between teacher and students will be as important as academic instruction. The following list of procedures is designed to serve as a guideline, not proposed as any rigid formula. The formal classroom approach is to be avoided; the teacher is encouraged to use all the resources of his imagination.

**Reading and Writing Skills****A. VERBAL ACTIVITIES**

1. Getting acquainted. It is perhaps better if the teacher initiates this activity by introducing himself to the class. The students may be reluctant to discuss themselves in a group and the teacher could arrange for private interviews.

2. Informal discussion. The students could report events, summarize the day's activities, discuss issues. The teacher should encourage the expression of conflicting points of view.

3. Oral reading. This could be tape recorded and played back. The teacher can make a brief and factual explanation of dialect differences by pointing out that his pronunciation is different from the students' (if it is) and that speech variations also include Boston (Kennedy), British, etc.

4. Development of competence in real life verbal situations. Skill in asking directions, giving instructions, using the telephone should be developed. The telephone company could be contacted for tele-trainer material (two model telephones) so that the students could practice the social and practical uses of the telephone. The telephone directory provides an opportunity to develop skill in alphabetizing.

5. Presenting material in several different ways. For example, saying the same thought in a: 1) formal, 2) informal, and 3) slangy manner.

6. Improvisations. This is usually presented in terms of a real life situation where each participant is trying to achieve a specific goal, to get something from the others.

#### B. WRITING ACTIVITIES

1. Writing summaries of discussions. This can entail instruction in spelling, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization; it can provide an opportunity for vocabulary development. Teach attentiveness to which are the main points, which details can be omitted and which are important (such as date, time, and place for a future meeting), accuracy.

2. Writing from dictation. This develops critical listening ability as well as providing an opportunity for instruction in all skills mentioned above.

3. Writing reports of experiences, such as voter registration activities.

4. Writing endings to stories. The teachers could read part of a story, stop before the conclusion is given and ask students to write an ending. Other methods would be to give plot details and ask students to compose a story or to read the complete story and ask for alternative endings.

5. Writing poetry. A number of stimuli are necessary for poetry or creative prose. This activity could follow the reading of poetry to the class. Other incentives are natural surroundings, pictures, recorded music, sounds. (The students could close their eyes, for example, while the teacher crumples cellophane or paper. The students could be asked to “think with their imaginations” and to describe what the sound suggests to them.)

6. Writing reports for newspapers. This involves the accurate reporting of facts and develops the ability to see significant details. There is also an opportunity here to demonstrate the difference between fact and opinion, objective reporting and propaganda.

7. Writing persuasive material, such as a handbill. This could follow a verbal activity where one student had to persuade another student. The activity could begin on a personal level—i.e., one student could ask another for a pencil or a dime—and build up to the point where the student has to persuade his antagonist to accept a different belief about an issue. This kind of activity develops the ability to “think on the feet.”

8. Filling out forms such as applications, social security, voter registration forms, etc.

9. Writing social and business letters.

#### C. SUGGESTED READING ACTIVITIES

1. Reading newspaper reports, magazines, short stories, etc., for comprehension and evaluation.

2. Reading and summaries of activities. New words can be introduced by taking words from the selection and substituting words of similar meaning. This can involve the use of the dictionary. Reading comprehension skills can be employed by having a student derive the meaning of a word from the context of the sentence.

#### D. RELATED ACTIVITIES

1. Drawing pictures to illustrate poems, stories, and experiences.

2. Listening to poems and stories, listening to each other, role playing and activities where students can teach others, problem-solving discussion.

3. Following instructions—a recipe, for example, where the student also has the opportunity to see the importance of weights and measurements in something as specific as cooking (how to double a recipe), or following instructions for a sewing pattern or make-your-own construction.

4. Drawing and reading maps, interpreting tables; using indexes, tables of contents, glossaries, etc.

5. Homework. Simple, easily completed assignments should be made so that the students gain an opportunity to realize his responsibility for his education. Hopefully, this will stimulate independent investigation.

6. Testing. While this is not necessarily endorsed as an educational tool, it is one means of evaluating progress. Also, it is a fact of life—testing is a key factor in the voter registration situation and is something that college students have to deal with constantly. It should be presented in that context. Teach how to approach a test question—what is being asked? Which answers are only partially true, or although true, may be irrelevant to the question.

7. Relaxation activities. The teachers will probably want to teach more than anyone can learn in a six-week period. There will be a danger of making class sessions too concentrated for the students. On the other hand, the teachers may decide that a particular session is going badly and is, frankly, dull for the students. If attention lags for either reason, the teacher should switch to another kind of activity. These activities can continue the teacher's basic educational purpose if they are well-planned and well-selected, and still be reinvigorating for the class. Some ideas are drawing, breaking up for smaller discussion groups, and informal games.

Some ideas for games which can develop verbal skills in students are:

1. Twenty-five. Each youngster draws on a piece of paper a square of twenty-five boxes. Everyone calls a letter in turn. The object is to create words either across or down the columns. (I have found that teen-agers take a strong liking to this game, even those who can't spell well. Many points are scored simply by accident.)

2. Rogues' Gallery. Players must guess the names of people in pictures cut out from newspapers and magazines. A careful selection of pictures results in an interesting learning situation.

3. Observation. Players must list objects which they have seen and are then covered up.

4. Words and Pictures. Words, sentences, or paragraphs must be clipped from magazines of newspapers so as to write a story about a picture taken from a magazine. These words get pasted on a piece of paper. No words are to be written.

5. Sight Unseen. Teams of two. One person describes an object. The other person must draw the unnamed and unseen object as well as he can.

6. Hall of Fame. A letter is suggested (or can be elaborately chosen by the class), time is kept, and everybody puts down as many names, first or last, beginning with that letter as he can remember. Use a general list or else concentrate on certain categories.

7. Word Relations. Each player lists words by association; then the field is reversed. Winner is a person who makes least mistakes when order is reversed.

8. Letter Dice. (Individual game) Five dice marked with letters rather than numbers are thrown and from the letters appearing on the five surfaces the student must make a word.

9. TV Quiz Game. Adaptations of such games as Twenty Questions, Password, Concentration, etc. can be used to bring out points made in discussion, summarize class activities, etc.—or just make a break if a session gets dull.

## E. SUMMARY

The resourcefulness of the teacher is a tremendously important element. As material will not be at hand, the teacher will most likely have to proceed on a day-to-day basis—using the xerograph, if available. In the matter of classroom procedure, questioning is the vital tool. It is meaningless to flood the student with information he cannot understand; questioning is the path to enlightenment. It requires a great deal of skill and tact to pose the question that will stimulate but not offend, lead to un-self-consciousness and the desire to express thought.

Classroom activities should not be dealt with as fragmented, isolated parts of a program; one activity should flow naturally from another (speaking and listening preceding reading and writing) with the students' experience as the source for the learning material. The relationship between school and life should be reinforced constantly.

*[Editors' Note: This part of the Academic Curriculum is, with minor modifications, the report of the Curriculum Conference Report of the subgroup 2, Remedial Academic Program. The report was written by Sandra Adickes.]*

**PART I: ACADEMIC CURRICULUM: MATHEMATICS**

(excerpt)

Note to Freedom School teachers:

This diagnostic is rather important in the summer curriculum. Your students will demonstrate a wide variety of levels of mathematical knowledge and we wish to satisfy individual needs as much as possible. This test should help you find just what each student needs. Administer the test in the manner you think best. Some students will only be able to solve a few of the arithmetic problems, if that. Let them go when they feel they can do no more. I would suggest a very liberal time allowance. Most likely few of the students have seen any set theory but, given time, many could solve that section. Perhaps you'll want to break the test up into two parts. Perhaps it would be best for some students if you sat down with them and went through the test problem by problem, offering hints when necessary. Those students who are able to work the test will want something new. Suggestions are analytic geometry, probability theory, or the binary number system. But you are invited and encouraged to use your imagination in inventing a course for them. One word of advice. The standard method of teaching math in Mississippi is through routine drill, and more routine drill. If your course tends to seem routine, like regular school, the students will tend to lose interest and you may lose them. Be creative. Experiment. The kids will love it.

....

*[Editors' Note: The test that follows consists of four pages of increasingly difficult problems in Arithmetic, Algebra, Set Theory, and Geometry]*

### Supplementary Lectures

Note to the teachers: these lectures are intended to give a bit of mathematics from a different point of view. You may alter or add to this as you like. (Actually, these are only a couple of ideas of how a teacher can show his students something new and different. You will need to amplify what is written here.) Feel free to write up your own lectures.

#### Lecture I, Geometric Computation.

The point of this lecture is to demonstrate methods of addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and the taking of square roots by geometric methods. Recall that the square root of a number  $Y$  is the number  $Z$  such that  $Z$  times  $Z$  equals  $Y$ . The square root of 9 is 3 because 3 times 3 equals 9.

Addition and subtraction are rather easy. First draw a horizontal line. Call it an axis and find a point on it which we call the "origin." Open the compass to a given unit length. Let's add 2 and 3. First place the point of the compass on the origin and mark off a unit length on the axis to the right of the origin. Then place the point of the compass on the new point and mark off another point to the right which will be a unit length's distant. This gives us our two. Mark off three more places to the right. Now we have added 2 and 3 and are 5 units to the right of the origin which illustrates that  $2 + 3 = 5$ .

Subtraction is similar. . . .

*[Editors' Note: the lecture continues over 4 pages, including graphics and examples, with increasing difficulty and ending with vector addition. The SNCC papers contain more Mathematics addenda.]*



## ***PART I: ACADEMIC CURRICULUM: SCIENCE***

(Enclosed are my suggestions for science curricula for the Freedom Schools. These are merely outlines; I could not do any more than this since I do not know what the general education level is, what equipment is available, how many people will be able to teach science, etc. The outline may seem somewhat advanced in level; however, what I have in mind is to keep most of the work qualitative, i.e. descriptive rather than mathematical. In this way, a broad range of scientific material can be introduced and the students' interest will not be lost in too many details, and physical or biological principles can be emphasized. . . .

Walter E. Gross)

### **PHYSICS AND CHEMISTRY**

#### 1. Mechanics.

Motion. How we describe it. Speed. Velocity (speed and direction of motion.) Acceleration. Forces. What a force is. Different kinds of forces, e.g. pulls and pushes, gravity springs. Force causes acceleration.  
Application of these principles. Projectiles. Motion in a circle.

#### 2. Heat and gas laws.

What a temperature is. What heat is. Difference between the two. Effects of heat: boiling, evaporation, expansion, contraction.  
Pressure.  
Gas laws: relationships between temperature, volume, and pressure for a gas.

#### 3. Atomic physics and chemistry.

Matter is composed of atoms: why we believe this and how this was discovered. The great experiments that led up to this.  
Combination of atoms into molecules. Elements and compounds.  
What an atom is made of: neutrons, protons, electrons. The nucleus.  
How atoms hold together: electric forces between the protons and the electrons.  
Periodic Table of the elements.  
The Nucleus: composed of protons and neutrons. Properties of these particles: Mass, charge, spin.  
Mass and energy as equivalent. Nuclear energy.

#### 4. Electricity.

Forces between charges. Electric field between stationary charges. Magnetic field when charges move.  
Electrons in metals. Become free of atoms, and move; called currents.  
Applications of electricity: magnets; motors; generators.

#### 5. Optics.

What light is. 2 theories: wave or particles. Evidence for each.  
Speed of light.  
Intensity.  
Mirrors.

Refraction: lenses.

Optical instruments: telescope, microscope; the eye.

## **ASTRONOMY**

### 1. The Solar System.

The 9 planets: How they were discovered; Sizes; surface features; atmospheres.

Moons of each planet. Similarities and difference to the earth's moon.

How we know that the planets go around the sun, even though it seems that they—and the sun—go around the earth.

### 2. Outside the solar system

Galaxies, i.e. systems of stars. Our own galaxy the “Milky Way”. Distances.

Well-known stars; constellations. The North star. Sirius, the nearest star. How to measure distances: the light year.

How stars are made up; the sun.

### 3. Space travel.

Work that has already been done. Satellites and rockets.

Landing on the moon; the first stage.

Traveling to the planets; what might be learned.

## **BIOLOGY**

### 1. The cell. Why we believe living things are composed of cells.

How a cell is made—general features.

One celled animals and plants.

More complicated cells. Cells specialize and perform one function only: e.g. blood cells, nerve cells, fat cells.

Simple features of heredity: genes and chromosomes.

### 2. Plants.

Photosynthesis. Mechanism; importance in producing food for all living things.

### 3. Animals. Simple animals.

Vertebrae; evolution—how it was discovered and what its significance was. Description of the various kinds of animals throughout evolution.

### 4. Present research in biology.

Application of chemical techniques (biochemistry)

Application of physical techniques (biophysics)

## ***PART II: CITIZENSHIP CURRICULUM, UNIT I - VI***

### **Introduction**

One of the purposes of the Freedom Schools is to train people to be active agents in bringing about social change. We have attempted to design a developmental curriculum that begins on the level of the students' everyday lives and those things in their environment that they have either already experienced or can readily perceive, and builds up to a more realistic perception of American society, themselves, the conditions of their oppression, and alternatives offered by the Freedom Movement.

It is not our purpose to impose a particularly set of conclusions. Our purpose is to encourage the asking of questions, and hope that society can be improved.

The curriculum is divided into seven units:

1. Comparison of student's reality with others (the way the students live and the way others live)
2. North to Freedom? (the Negro in the North)
3. Examining the apparent reality (the "better lives" that whites live)
4. Introducing the power structure
5. The poor Negro and the poor white
6. Material things versus soul things
7. The movement

Each unit develops concepts that are needed for those that follow.

Physically, the content (suggested questions and concepts) is on the right side of each page with suggested case studies and visual aid material listed opposite. [Note by Emery and Gold: in this printing, the content of the curriculum is printed as normal text, the suggested case studies etc. are in italics, and inserted as documents where available.]

The suggested questions and concepts in the content portion of each page constitute the teaching guide. It should be emphasized that these are only suggestions, and that individual teachers may interpret the concepts in different ways or substitute other methods. There is probably more in each unit than it will be possible to use, but it was included so that each teacher would have a range of material to choose from, and extra material if necessary.

There are two additional sets of questions **THAT ARE TO BE REINTRODUCED PERIODICALLY**, both permit an on-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the curriculum, and to provide students with recurring opportunities for perceiving their own growth in sophistication.

The **BASIC SET OF QUESTIONS** is:

1. Why are we (students and teachers) in Freedom Schools?
2. What is the freedom movement?
3. What alternatives does the freedom movement offer us?

The **SECONDARY SET OF QUESTIONS** is:

1. What does the majority culture have that we want?
2. What does the majority culture have that we don't want?
3. What do we have that we want to keep?

### Unit I—Comparison of Students' Realities with Others

**Purpose:** To create an awareness that there are alternatives

**Materials:** Statistical data on education, housing, etc.  
 “The South as an Underdeveloped Country”  
*[Inserted by Editors:]* The Poor in America

Introduction: *Student, teacher each tell about themselves.* We are not here to teach you. We are here to help you learn and to learn together. We are going to talk about a lot of things: about Negro people and white people, about rich people and poor people, about the South and about the North, about you and what you think and feel and want, and about me.

And we’re going to try to be honest with each other and say what we believe.

We’ll also ask some questions and try to find some answers. The first thing is to look around, right here, and see how we live in Mississippi.

#### SCHOOLS—CONDITIONS IN NEGRO SCHOOLS

1. What kind of school is it [Negro School]? Sample questions: How many grades does it have? How many classrooms? What is it made of, wood or brick? Do you have textbooks, new or old? Do you have a library, movies, maps, charts, electric lights, a gymnasium? How many teachers, white or Negro? Laboratory space and equipment, desks, blackboards, etc.? Do you have history, geography, science, foreign language, etc.?
2. What do you learn there? Sample questions: How many go to college? Are there trade or vocational schools? What kinds of jobs are you prepared for? What about current events—who do you learn is good, who do you learn is bad, what do you learn about the South, about the North, about Negroes, about whites, about Kennedy, Johnson, Eastland, Castro etc. What do you learn about voting and citizenship?
3. Where do you learn about these things? Radio, newspapers, TV, etc.
4. Is this good or bad? Can you think of anything that you would like to see changed? How could your school be made better?

#### SCHOOLS—CONDITIONS IN THE WHITE SCHOOLS

Where do the white children go to school? What are their schools like? Compare Negro schools with white schools.

*Visual Aids (pictures of school, laboratories, school libraries, school rooms, gymnasiums.)*

Here are some pictures of other schools in other states besides Mississippi (or some in Mississippi, too.)

Sample questions: Do you like these schools in the pictures? Are they like your school? How are they different? Why would you like to have better schools? What do you see in the pictures that is different from you and your school? Why do these differences exist?

#### HOUSING—CONDITIONS FOR NEGROES

Sample questions: Where do you live? How many rooms are there? How many people live with you? How many beds do you have? Is your house made of wood or stone or bricks? What color is it? Is it painted? Is there water, electricity, bathroom indoors? What kind of stove—wood, gas, kerosene, electric? Do you have heat in the winter? What kind? Furniture? What kind, how

much? Can you think of any kind of changes you'd like to see, or any other kinds of houses you'd like to live in?

Questions: Where do white children live in this town? What kinds of houses—are there houses different? How? Better? How? Where does the Police Chief live? The banker? The store owner, etc.?

*Visual Aids (pictures of both rural and suburban middle-class houses, modern bedrooms, bathroom, kitchens, living rooms, etc.)* Do you like these pictures? These houses? Are they like your house? How are they different? Would you like this kind of house? Why?

NOTE: Discuss relationships between housing and schools (i.e. privacy, a place to study, quiet and books in the home, as related to studying) and housing and health (i.e., overcrowding, unheated housing as related to ease of sharing communicable diseases such as colds, TB, and infant mortality rates; bring in statistics on Negro-white life expectancy and mortality rates in Mississippi)

Question: Why do these differences exist?

### EMPLOYMENT FOR NEGROES

Adult Employment (men and women):

Sample questions: Who works in your family? What kind of work does your father do? Your mother? Do they work for white people or for Negroes? Who works most (mother or father)? Do they get paid a lot or a little? What do they do with the money they make? —pay rent, buy food, buy clothes, buy things for you? Do you think they could use more money? Why? Why don't they get more money?

Children's employment.

Sample questions: Do you ever work? What kind of work? After school? Or do you have to stay home from school to work sometimes? What happens when you stay home? Do you miss learning? If so, why do you have to do it?

Employment for Whites.

Sample questions: in this town, what kind of jobs do white people do? Are there any Negro police or firemen, or store owners? Do Negroes work as clerks or cashiers in the store or the bank? Are there any Negroes who have tenant farmers, any Negro lawyers? Doctors, Negroes who work at the textile mills?

What kinds of jobs do people do? List responses and suggest areas through questions if necessary, i.e., who fixes cars, who makes our clothes, who sells them, who makes cars, airplanes, rockets, who builds houses, who invents machines (shoe last, air brake, telephone, etc.), who writes books, who fixes radios, plumbing, electricity, who drives tractors and mechanical cotton-pickers?

Break up into small groups and see which group can make up the largest list of jobs that people have, and what duties these jobs have.

Question: Can Negroes do these jobs? Are they smart enough? Do some Negroes do these jobs? If not, why not?

Questions: Can anyone name:

1. A Negro inventor (George Washington Carver, Jan Matzeliger, Elijah McCoy)
2. A Negro scientist (Dr. Charles Drew, Benjamin Banneker, Dr. Daniel Hale Williams.)
3. A Negro writer (Richard Wright, Phyllis Wheatley, Ralph Ellison, James Baldwin, Alexander Dumas, W.E.B. DuBois, Langston Hughes, M.L. King, Septima Clark, etc.)

*Material on Negroes in various fields, pictures, stories, etc. Poetry reading and discussion. Photos or drawings of Negroes and Negro history figures should be posted.*

Negro employment and white—salary comparison, etc. Review what has been discussed.

### MEDICAL FACILITIES

Is there any hospital here? Where do you (your parents) go if they are sick, have a baby, a car accident, etc.? Where is the nearest hospital? Is it for Negroes, white, both? If there are different hospitals for Negroes and whites, compare facilities. (How close are they? How many beds, doctors, operating rooms, etc.)

*Review Unit I.* (Include schools, housing, employment, health)

Suggested approach: We've talked about jobs and health in Mississippi and in other states, and we have seen that Negroes have to live one way and whites another. Remember, we found out that your schools were (list) and we found out that other schools were/had (list), etc.

Question: What can we do about this?

Re-introduce three basic questions:

1. Why are we (teachers and students) here in Freedom School?
2. What is the Freedom Movement?
3. What does the Freedom Movement have to offer you?

### Unit II—North to Freedom? (The Negro in the North)

**Purpose:** To help the students see clearly the condition of the Negro in the North, and see that migration to the North is not a basic solution.

**Summary:** Starting with a new clarity of their conditions in the South to raise the question of whether the Negro can escape oppression by going North.

**Materials:** Chester, Pennsylvania,  
New York City Schools  
*[Inserted by Editors:] Triple Revolution*

Suggested Introduction: *Map of U.S. with the South shaded. Point out each city.*

For years Negroes in Mississippi and other Southern states have seen how hard Jim Crow makes them live, just as we have talked about the last few days. In fact, since 1950, Negroes have left Mississippi (use census figures.) Where have they gone? Most of them have moved North, to Chicago, Detroit, New York, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Washington, Baltimore, Boston, etc. They have gone North looking for better jobs, more money, better schools, good hospitals, better housing. Now there are more than one million Negroes in New York City alone. Do you think that they've found what they were looking for? How do you know?

*Magazine pictures of city skyscrapers, bright lights, wide avenues, etc.,* Here is what some of those cities look like.

But how is it for the Negro?

They have had school boycotts to protest against segregation in Chicago, New York, Boston. Why?

*Case Studies: NYC Schools and Chester, Pa.*

Cover the Same Topics as in Unit I

Questions: *Picture or other materials on the ghetto.* Do you have relatives there? What do they say about the North? Do you have to say “yessir” to white men there? Do you have better housing in the slums or only crowded bad housing? Do you have better jobs in the North? (The median income of Negro families, nationally, in 1960, was half that of white families.) Does it cost more to live? How about schools? —better buildings, but still segregated, still overcrowded, still old textbooks, still few college graduates?

How about housing? More integrated neighborhoods in the South. In the North, housing very expensive and more expensive for bad housing. Negroes still can’t work at some jobs and they are paid less money. The overcrowding means there is more TB in Negro ghettos and a higher infant mortality rate. (30 percent higher among Negroes than whites).

Conclude: Itemize similarities in areas covered in Unit I (housing, jobs, schools, health).

Question: Are things better in the North? Is the Negro really free, equal? Why not?

Conclude: The Negro is a second-class citizen all over the U.S., and you can’t escape by leaving the South.

Introduce questions:

1. What does the dominant culture have that we want?
2. What does the dominant culture have that we don’t want?
3. What do we have that we want to keep?

### **Unit III—Examining the Apparent Reality (The “Better Life” That Whites Have)**

**Purpose:** To find out what the whites’ “better life” (better schools, jobs, housing, health facilities, etc.) is really like, and what it costs them.

**Materials:** Guide to Negro History, parts 1-3.  
*[Inserted by Editors:]* In White America  
*[Inserted by Editors:]* Negro History Addendum I  
*[Inserted by Editors:]* Negro History Addendum II  
*[Inserted by Editors:]* Negro History Study Questions  
*[Inserted by Editors:]* Development of Negro Power

Introduction, Suggestions: We have seen that Negroes live differently than whites in Mississippi and in the rest of the U.S.—and it seemed that whites go to better schools, get better jobs, and live in better houses than Negroes.

*Reintroduce pictures of school.* Let us see if it’s as good as it looks. The nice, new building, the laboratories, the school libraries, the gyms, and new textbooks and so on.

Concept: What education is.

Suggested questions: What do people learn in school beside reading, writing, and arithmetic? Do they learn things about other people? What? About jobs? What? About their country? What? About their city or town? About their government? About what they believe? About other countries? What?

1. Repeat pledge of allegiance. Analyze it: does it mean everything it says? When you say it, what does it teach you about your country and what it believes?

2. Recite the “Bill of Rights.” Analyze it: Does it teach us about our country’s beliefs? What? What does Freedom of Assembly mean? Does it mean you have the right to come together and demonstrate? If so, why do demonstrators go to jail? What does Freedom of Worship mean? Does it mean you can go into any church? If so, why do people get arrested at kneel-ins? What does Freedom of Speech mean? Do you have a right to say what you wish about voting and freedom and other things at rallies and meetings at Freedom Schools? Do you have a right to say what you wish on leaflets and are you free to distribute them? If not, why not?

Question: Are these things the truth? Are they just ideals that we talk about or do Americans really believe them and practice them? Why could this be?

Concept: That truth, freedom, liberty, equality, and other ideals are often distorted and used as excuses and justifications for contradictory actions.

Questions: Are there any other things that the schools teach us that are untrue—myths? Can you point out any of the myths that are taught in the schools? What do the schools teach about Negroes?

NOTE: There is a real opportunity here for the teacher (white or middle-class Negro), if he can be honest and searching enough, to share the misinformation or myths he learned about Negroes and/or himself, and use his experience to help deepen the insights of the students.

Suggested supplements to students’ lists:

1. That all Negroes were slaves.
2. That Negroes are inferior—mentally, morally, physically.
3. That Negroes were happy and satisfied as slaves (well-fed and singing and dancing on the plantation)
4. That Negroes are happy and satisfied now.
5. That Negroes are incapable of participating in government.
6. That Negroes don’t want to participate in government.
7. That Negroes are lazy.
8. That Negroes can only do menial work and nothing more.

**Examine each of these myths.**

Questions: How do you know these myths aren’t true? Can you give examples?

Suggestion: Let us explore history and see how true these myths are (take them one at a time).

*Case study: Guide to Negro History*

Myth: That Negroes were happy and satisfied as slaves.



(Present Guide to Negro History in storytelling style first, then have students dramatize extemporaneously, using their own words.)

NOTE: the dramatization of a slave revolt can serve an important function by permitting students to vent repressed hostility and aggression against whites and their condition.

*Case Study—Guide to Negro History, Part II: Negro Resistance to Oppression*

Raise myth again. Question: What do you think now? Were Negroes happy as slaves?

Myth: That Negroes don't want to participate in government and are incapable of participating.

*Case Study—Guide to Negro History, part III: Reconstruction (1865-1877) and the Beginning of Segregation*

**Raise myth again: Question: if Negroes can and want to participate in politics, why don't they?**

Myth: Negroes are inferior mentally, morally, and physically, and can do only menial work.

Cassius Clay and Joe Louis: list other accomplishments of outstanding Negroes in music, science, etc.

*Case Study—Guide to Negro History, part I: Origins of Prejudice (1600-1800)*

Raise myth again. Question: Why is this kind of myth started?

Concept: the effect on a person's self-image, motivation, and achievement when presented with low expectations (as exemplified by these myths.)

Questions: how do you feel in school when a teacher calls you "stupid" or "dumb"? Do you try harder or do you give up? Are you angry? (Set up other examples within the students' experience.)

Questions: What does this kind of myth do to you? Does it make you try? Does it make you proud to be Negro?

Discussion: Reintroduce three basic questions:

1. Why are we (students and teachers) here in Freedom Schools?
2. What is the Freedom Movement?
3. What alternative does the Freedom Movement have to offer?

We've talked about some of the myths that the schools teach; let us see what some of the others are.

NOTE: At this point schools might use the discussion method to try to help the students discover other myths from their own experience or what they have seen or heard on TV or the movies, etc. They might even be asked to recite the plots of war movies or cowboy and Indian movies, and

then follow up with questions, etc. (I.e., why are the Indians always bad and savage? Why are Negroes always domestic savages? {servants?})

Question: What do these movies teach us?

Review entire Unit III. What is taught in the schools and through other media? The myths of our society (enumerate) and what the effect of these myths is on the Negro (and other Americans) and what purposes these serve.

Re-introduce three secondary questions:

1. What does the American majority society have that we want?
2. What does it have that we don't want?
3. What do we have that we want to keep?

### Unit IV—Introducing the Power Structure

**Purpose:** 1. To create an awareness that some people profit by the pain of others or by misleading them;

2. To create an awareness that some people make decisions that profoundly affect others (i.e., bare power);

3. To develop the concept of “political power.”

**Summary:** Starting with the material learned in preceding units on Negro-white differences in education, housing, etc. and the use of myths to distort and misinform, to develop a concept of who constructs the myths, who profits from them, and how they profit both in local (town and state of Mississippi) terms and in larger terms. And to name these people as “decision-makers” and “the power structure.”

**Materials:** Mississippi Power Structure;  
The Power of the Dixiecrats  
*[Inserted by Editors:] Nazi Germany*

Review—suggested approach: Let's see what we have learned so far. We have learned that Negroes and whites live differently in both the South and the North and that Negroes are not given equal treatment in housing, education, etc. We have learned that although it seems that white people have better schools, for instance, that they pay for it by learning lies, and by learning to “hate” and be afraid. We have learned that we are misled by these lies too—that the myths have taught us to believe that we are inferior and dumb and that we have made no contributions to our society.

Now we want to find out why the schools tell these lies and find out who is helped by these lies.

**Concept:** That the myths serve a purpose by:

1. Keeping Negroes servile and teaching whites to feel superior.
2. Providing a justification for race relations in this country.

Questions: Why do the schools tell these lies? Who hears and believes them? What do they believe? How does it make them feel to believe these things? Do the lies give them excuses?

What kinds of excuses do the lies provide:

- \* If a white man kills a Negro?
- \* If a policeman beats a Negro for demonstrating?
- \* If a policeman beats a white demonstrator?
- \* If a Negro is refused the vote?
- \* If a Negro tries to integrate a school?
- \* If Negroes are paid less money for the same work?
- \* If white workers want to start a union?

Now, who profits by these lies? Let's start here in this town.

*Case Study: Mississippi Power Structure, Part I.*

Concept: That some people profit by the propagation of myths (make money, gain power, bolster up their egos, etc.,)

Question: Who makes money when Negroes are paid less than white people? *Ask students about plantations near where they live; about factories near where they live.*

Example: A cotton farmer's profit is the price he gets for his cotton minus what he pays for labor. Does the farmer make more money if the workers he hires are Negro? Why? Is it profitable for the farmer to keep Negro labor cheap? How does he do it? Do the myths help him do it? How?

Example: Why does Northern industry come to Mississippi? They come from the North because Mississippi has cheaper labor and they can make more money. Why does Mississippi have cheap labor? Because there are no unions? Because there are white workers in Mississippi who are told that unions believe in integration. Where there are no unions, the workers are paid less and the businessman makes more money. Do the myths help to keep the salaries low for whites too?

(Caution: many unions maintain segregationist practices.)

Question: Why don't white people want the Negro to vote?

Example: The same farmer is able to pay Negroes less money than white people are paid because the state laws of Mississippi support segregation and inequality. Who makes these laws? How do they get their jobs? Who elects them? What would happen to these men and these laws if Negroes voted? Would you vote for a man who made laws that paid you less? Does the farmer vote for them? Does the business man? Do white workers? Why?

Concept: That poor whites suffer from the myths too.

Questions: If there was a union, the white workers would make more money too. Why, then, do they vote for politicians who are against unions? Are they more afraid of something else? Why are they so afraid of integration? What have the myths and lies that they have learned done to them? Who profits by this? The rich farmer? The rich businessman? How?

Concept: That the police work for the power structure and enforce the status quo.

Example: The following is an excerpt from one of Franklin D. Roosevelt's press conferences in 1938, when he unsuccessfully attempted to purge Southern reactionaries from the Democratic Party. Roosevelt described the experience of union organizers in a Southern town in a way that makes one think of COFO today:

They got in town about ten o'clock in the morning. They had a list of eight or ten of the operators. They were going to see them at the noon hour.

So they went to the factory and they asked, “Where is so and so? Where can I find so and so?”

They were engaged in asking questions, when one of the mill police tapped him on the shoulder and showed his badge and said, “Come with me.”

He said, “We have not done anything; we are outside and on the street and just asking to see some fellows.”

“Oh, we know; come with me.”

They were taken to the police station and locked up in a cell on the charge of vagrancy. Both of them had, oh, fifteen or twenty dollars apiece in their clothes.

They said, “We are not vagrants; we came down here from such and such a city.”

“But you are organizers.”

“Of course we are organizers.”

“Well, you are in a bad place.”

They were kept in jail until five o’clock, just before dark, and the judge came in and said,

“What are you doing here?”

“We are down here to try to start an organization of the textile workers of this mill.”

“That is what you think,” he said. “Ten dollars fine and out of town before six o’clock, and do not come back.”

They did not know what they were fined for, but they paid the fine, and as they went out of the courtroom, one of the marshals, or policemen, went up to them and said, “Which way are you boys going?” They said, “We have got to get out of town and we thought we would go to such and such a town, ten miles away.”

They rode with him and he said, “This is where I turn off.” They went about a quarter of a mile and out of a clump of bushes came some men with blackjacks and they got the worst beating up that any two people could get without getting killed.”

Question: Who helps to keep the Negro from voting and the union from starting? Who helps the farmer and businessman make money by enforcing the segregation laws? Who pays the police? Who gives them their orders? Why? What would happen to a policeman who didn’t obey orders? Why do the police follow orders?

Important to bring out:

1. For pay
2. For illicit gains from graft, etc.
3. Because they have learned the myths too, and “hate”

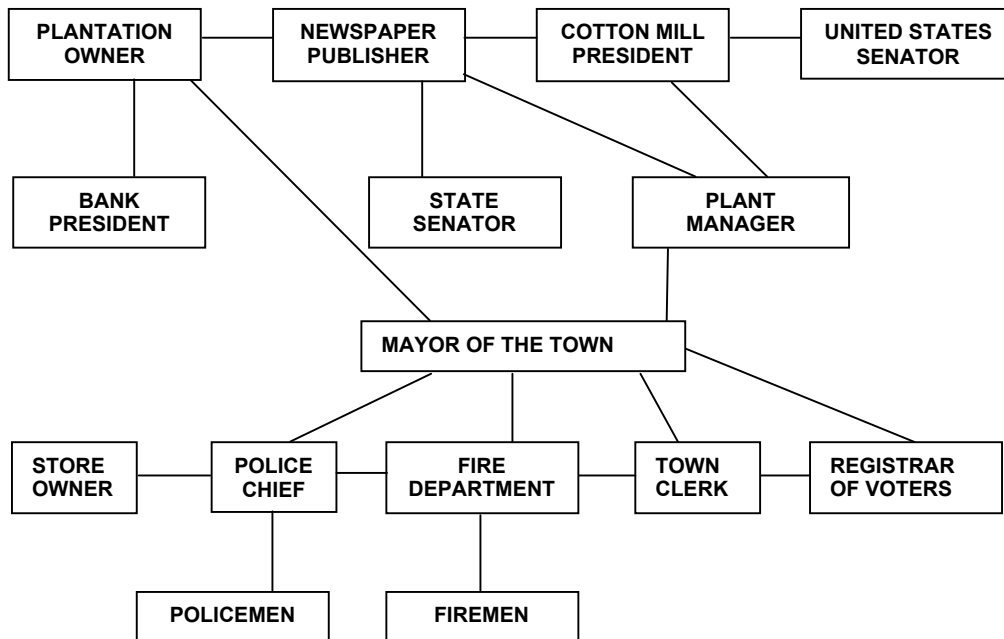
and “fear”

### *Case Study: Mississippi Power Structure, Part II*

What is a power structure? That is the name we give to groups of men who make the myths, who profits from them like the farmer and the businessman who pay the police and give them their orders, who make the laws and decide what laws they want, who make decisions about who gets paid and how much they get, about who votes and who doesn’t vote, about what is taught in the schools, and what gets printed in the newspapers., etc.

Can you name some of these men in your town? (Suggestions: look for the mayor, big plantation owners, businessmen, plant managers, mill owners, etc.)

Suggestion: With the information you get from either students, parents, or COFO research staff, construct an organizational chart of the power structure on the blackboard or large paper.



Show how a decision made on the upper level gets passed down through the chain of command and finally implemented.

Example: *Dramatize if possible.* A Negro tries to register. The registrar of voters fails him, and calls the Mayor. The next day the plantation owner fires him and orders him off the land, and his name is published in the newspaper. The bank forecloses on his car, and the store refuses him any more credit and the county welfare department says he must get three references from white people before he is eligible for relief. His wife is fired from her job as a cook for a white family. When they move in with relatives, the house is shot up one night and the Negro man arrested on "Suspicion."

Concept: That the Power Structure is a connecting and interlocking series of cliques that goes from local towns and cities up to the highest levels of the national government.

*Case Study:* The Power of the Dixiecrats.

We have seen that there is what we call a power structure in this town—a small group of men that make the decisions in this town—they run it, they decide when schools are built and what is taught. They decide, as much as they can, who votes and who doesn't; they decide who gets a loan from the bank; they make the laws. In every other town and country of this state, there are other men who do the same things—who make the plans and decide what will happen for all the rest of us. They decide who will run for the United States Congress; they pay for the campaigns; they decide what laws will be made; and they help to make the myths that we all learn.

Southern representatives in Congress, acting on behalf of the Southern power structure, obstruct progress not only in the South but in the whole nation. Because of the one-party system in the South, these representatives serve in the House and Senate over and over again. Their seniority enables them to become chairmen of key committees. Examples: Senator Eastland of Mississippi is the Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, influences the appointment of judges to the Federal Courts in which civil rights demonstrators are tried.

Discussion: Review entire Unit IV. Raise and answer the three basic questions. Raise and answer the three secondary questions.

### Unit V—The Poor Negro, the Poor White, and their Fears

**Purpose:**

1. To indicate that the Power Structure derives its power in the final analysis, by playing upon the fears of the people, Negro and white;
2. To come to an understanding of these fears—what has helped to produce them and what they, in turn, have produced, namely, the myths, the lies, the system;
3. To grasp the deeper effects of the system we have produced and have allowed to continue, the deep psychological damage to Negroes and whites.

**Materials:** *Case Study on Hazard, Kentucky*

Introduction: We have talked about the world we want and the world we now have. Something is wrong with the world we have. We have looked at some of the wrong things. Now let us look at why the world has come to be as it now is . . . in particular, our world here in the South.

Concept: That the “power structure”—which, as we have seen, is one force that maintains a bad world—derives its power from playing upon the fears of the people, Negro and white.

Questions: Have you ever been afraid? Have you every been afraid enough to let somebody else take your punishment or take the blame for something they did not do? Were you afraid of being punished yourself? What is punishment? Physical pain like a beating? Could punishment also be losing something you wanted to keep? Like money? Like your pride? When you were a child, were you ever punished by having to stay inside the house, or in your room, or stand in the corner at school? Was this punishment loss of pride?

Here are some things we have learned about the “power structure.” (Write them on the blackboard.)

1. The “power structure” is made up of a small number of people who, because of their power, have a great deal of control over our lives.
2. Their power is financial and it is political.
3. They use their power to maintain segregation.

Here is something we do not know about the “power structure.” Why is it possible for such a small group to have so much control over all the rest of us? Is it only because they have money? If so, where do they get their money? Is it because of their political power? Where do they get the political power? Could it be that the “power structure” has power because we let it? That these few control us because we let them? Why? Why would we let a few people not only control us but control us in such a terrible way, build such a terrible world?

Do we like what they do? No? Then why do we let them do it? Are we afraid? What about whites? Are they afraid? Do they like to be controlled by a few people? Does anybody? What about poor whites? Isn't their condition much like ours? Poverty, unemployment, fear? Is it true that the "power structure" has power only because we give it to them—we and the whites. The power structure is built upon the fear of Negroes and the fear of whites. What if we moved out from under this structure? Where would be power go then? To the people? The whites will not move because they fear us because they believe the lies about us. Is it possible to show these whites the truth? How? What would happen if the whites and Negroes got together and moved right out from under the "power structure"? Do we have anything in common that might draw us together? What? What keeps us apart? Fear? Yes.

The "power structure" gets its power, in the final analysis, because we allow them power and we allow them power because we are afraid of something.

Concept: That the people of the South, Negro and white, are afraid; that the fears are sometimes different, sometimes alike; that all the fears work together to perpetuate the system.

Questions: Why should Negroes be afraid? Is there any real basis for our fear? Of course there is. We have been beaten and murdered, have lost our jobs and homes. We have real reason to fear. What about whites? Do most whites agree with the "power structure" and the lies? Why? Are they afraid? Why?

Let us imagine what might have happened inside the white man, over the years, to fill him with so much fear. We know in part already what happened to make the Negro fear—he was shot and lynched and murdered and beaten. What made the white fear? Write on board "What Happened Inside the White Man?" Let's list the things which might have caused him to create myths and lies.

1. Slavery: since the white man in the South lies about Negroes, let us begin with the coming of Negroes. We came from an unknown continent and we were unknown to the whites. Can we compare this lack of knowledge with, say, Columbus' day when men said if you sailed far enough, you would fall right off the earth? So the white men looked at us and we were unknown. They created myths—Africa is a deep dark place filled with savages.

2. Guilt: it is true that the white man did not know and still does not know much about Negroes. But it is also true that no man in his right mind can put any other man in chains without, sooner or later, feeling guilt.

Not long after the beginning of slavery, the guilt of the white man began. What did he do with this guilt inside him? He did not free us? Why?

3. Economics: the white man needed the Negro to work the plantation. He chose then not to free the Negro and so he had to find some other way to get rid of his guilt. What did he do to try to get rid of it?

4. Fear and lies: What does guilt do to you? Have you ever felt guilty? Does it make you afraid inside? What does fear do? Suppose you have done something you know to be wrong and you are first guilty and then afraid? Do you make up lies to get out of it? Have you ever tried to excuse yourself? Protect yourself? The white man did. He wanted to keep his slaves but he wanted very much to get rid of his guilt . . . so he made up lies: He said Negroes were not really human, therefore there is no reason for me to feel guilty. And from guilt came the whole lie of white supremacy/Negro inferiority . . . and from guilt came segregation.

As we saw, the power structure uses segregation to keep poor Negroes and poor whites from working together to solve their common problems. Segregation is also the white man's program for hiding away the cause of his guilt—the Negro—hiding him in slums, segregated schools, backyards. Segregation is a wall the white man builds to hide from you, the cause of his guilt . . . and by hiding you, to hide from his own conscience.

Negroes and whites are afraid. Negroes have reason to be afraid. Whites are afraid because of guilt. When Negroes are afraid, they continue to go along with the system. The same is true of whites. And so we say that: there is great fear in the South and it is from this fear that the “power structure” derives its power, from fear that the system keeps going. What do fear and lies do to people?

Concept: that the fear we have felt and the lies we have lived and the guilt have done great damage to us all, Negro and white.

Questions: What happens to you when you keep telling a lie over and over? Do you finally believe it? If you do not believe it, what happens inside to keep telling it anyway? What happens if you are afraid of something for a long long time? Does it change you inside? Does fear finally destroy something in you? What about guilt? If you are guilty of something and have to hide for a long long time, what happens? Are you happy? Free?

Draw a stick figure on the board—a man standing tall and straight. Here is man. He stands tall and straight as he is meant to stand. Draw a man stooped with his head hung down. Here is man again. What do you feel when you look at this figure? Tired? Old? Ashamed? Sick? Draw a stick figure stooped behind a fence or wall. What about this man? What do you feel? Fear? Hiding? What is alike about these two figures? They are bent. Is the first man bent?

Point to the first stooped figure. Have you ever seen a real person walk or stand this way? A Negro? A white man? Why? Age? Illness? Shame? Fear? Guilt? How about the other figure? Have you seen that? Which figure do you like? Why?

What do these figures represent? Above the two stooped figures draw arrows pointing down upon them and pressing them down. What do these arrows do? What do they represent?

We are talking about what lies do to people. What do you think about this? Do lies destroy something in man? Yes. Living, telling, or believing lies destroys something in us all. If somebody tells you that you are bad or lazy or inferior or guilty—you can either believe them or not. Suppose you do not believe them. Suppose you know better, but still they continue to tell you are bad . . . what happens inside you? Anger? Frustration? Despair? Sickness? Suppose you believe the lies? Do you know Negroes who have come to believe that they are inferior? How do they act? How do they stand? Walk? What about whites? Have you seen the face of a white man twisted in hate, fear, anger? Is it the face of a free man? A happy man? Have you seen the empty faces of whites on Main Street—faces that look through you—blank and empty. Are they the faces and eyes of free and happy people? No. No, they are not. White men have lost their health too—the health of their minds and of their bodies . . . from living the lies. No man can live the lie without being bent. The whole South is bent . . . and broken.

Can we really compare Negroes and whites in this matter of being free? It is clear to anyone who looks around that Negroes are not free to grow, to move about, to learn and develop and become whole inside. How about whites? Look down the biggest street in town. You see find houses, cars, pools, trees, lawns. Do most whites live this way? Do whites who live this way have freedom? Does it show in their faces? If they had freedom, why would they also have fear? Do free men fear? Why would they have hatred? If they were free, why would they lock the doors of



their big houses? What about the rest of the whites? Those who have no fine houses and cars? What do they have? White skin? Are they free then? Is the KKK a group of happy men? No. No, we are not free and not happy. Because we are bent, broken, divided, not whole. We have taken a piece of ourselves and turned it over the “power structure” which is simply to say, we have turned ourselves over to a lie.

1. The “power structure” is one force that helps to maintain the world; in the South, that helps to maintain the terrible world of segregation.
  2. That “power structure” derives its power, in the final analysis, from the fears of both whites and Negroes.
  3. Poor whites and Negroes are oppressed by the “power structure.” We have much in common.
  4. If poor whites and Negroes could get together and move out from under the “power structure,” it would fall.
  5. We do not move because we are afraid.
  6. Generally, the Negro’s fear is based upon very real danger.
  7. Generally, the white’s fear is based upon guilt.
  8. Fear—whatever the cause—produces lies. We live in the South.
  9. Living lies bends and breaks us.
  10. That is to say—keeps us from being whole.
- That is to say—keeps us from being free.

Have you ever heard this: “Ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free?”  
 Have we seen in this unit that lies and the fear behind lies and the guilt behind the fear . . . work together to enslave men?  
 If lies enslave us, then Truth will free us.  
 What IS the Truth? That is . . . what will make us free?  
 In the next unit, we will try to find the answer to the question: What is the Truth? Or, the same question: What is freedom?

## Unit VI—Material Things and Soul Things

**Purpose:** 1. To develop insights about the inadequacies of pure materialism;  
 2. To develop some elementary concepts of a new society.

**Summary:** Starting with a questioning of whether the material things have given the “power structure” satisfaction, to raise the question of whether achievement will bring the Negro and/or the poor white fulfillment. Then to explore whether the conditions of his oppression have given the Negro insights and values that contribute to the goal of a more human society. And finally to develop this relevance into some insights as to the characteristics of a new society.

**Materials:** Statements of Discipline of Nonviolent Movements.

Introduction: The last few days we have been exploring in another world—different than the one we live in everyday—the world of the “power structure,” and we have made some interesting discoveries:

1. That the “power structure” has a lot of power to make things happen just as they want them to be.

2. That the “power structure” has a lot of money that buys—big, luxurious houses, expensive cars, expensive clothing, trips, and all the other things we see on TV and in the movies.

But we’ve also discovered that—

1. The “power structure” is afraid of losing its power and its money; and
2. The “power structure” is afraid of Negroes and poor whites find out the “truth” and getting together.

Ideas to be developed:

1. The possessions of men do not make them free. Negroes will not be freed by:
  - a. Taking what the whites have.
  - b. A movement directed at materialistic ends only.
2. The structure of society can be altered.
3. While a radically new social structure must be created in order to give man the room to grow in, it is not the changing of structure alone that produces a good life or a good world. It is also the ethical values of the individual.
4. There are many kinds of power we could use to build a new society.

Concept: That just taking the “power structure’s” money and power would not make us happy either.

We have seen that having money and power does not make the “power structure” happy. We have seen that they have to pay a price for it.

Questions: Would just taking their money and power away and keeping it ourselves make us happy? Wouldn’t we have to be afraid and distrust people too? Wouldn’t we have to make up lies to convince ourselves that we were right? Wouldn’t we have to make up lies to convince other people that we were right? Wouldn’t we, too, have to keep other people down in order to keep ourselves up?

Suppose you had a million dollars. You could buy a boat, a big car, a house, clothes, food, and many good things. But could you buy a friend? Could you buy a spring morning? Could you buy health? And how could we be happy without friends, health, and spring?

This is a freedom movement; suppose this movement could get a good house and job for all Negroes. Suppose Negroes had everything that the middle class of America has . . . everything that the rest of the country has . . . would it be enough? Why are there heart attacks and diseases and so much awful unhappiness in the middle class . . . which seems to be so free? Why the Bomb?

Concept: That the structure of society can be changed. Discussion of a possible new society.

1. Money—should a few people have a lot of money, should everybody have the same, should everybody have what they need?
2. Jobs—should men be able to work at any job they can do and like, regardless of color, religion, nationality? Suppose a man were put out of a job by automation (like the mechanical picker?) What should happen to him? Should he just sit around? Should he be trained for a new job? Who can train him? When he is old, should he have to depend on his family or be poor? Should he be helped when he is old? Why? Should all workers join together if they wish? Should they share in the profits? Why?

3. Housing—Should every family be able to live where they wish to live, regardless of race or religion? Why? Should every family have a decent home? Should it have heat, a kitchen, a bathroom, hot water, nice furniture? Why does the kind of house a family has affect their family life? Suppose a family does not have enough money? Does a family have a basic right to good housing?

4. Health—should all people have a right to receive the same medical services regardless of religion or race or money? Should all people be able to receive whatever medical services they need regardless of how rich or poor they are? Why? From whom?

5. Education—Should all children be able to go to the same schools regardless of their race or religion? Should all children have the right to get as much education as they are capable of? Suppose they can't afford to go to special high schools or to college? Should they still be able to go? How? Who should pay?

What should be taught in schools? Do we teach myths and lies? Why? Should we? Should we train people for jobs in schools? To be good citizens? What else should we train people for?—culture, resourcefulness, world citizenship, respect for other people and cultures, peace? What about teaching adults? Should they have a chance too? Should it be free? Should they be able to go to special schools if necessary?

6. Legal—Should the laws and the courts treat all people the same? Should the laws be more concerned with protecting the property a man has or the man himself? Why?

7. Political system—should every man have the right to vote? What if he cannot read? Should he still have the right to vote and choose his representatives? Should politicians have a right to give out favors? Can they be honest in this system? Suppose people can get good housing, jobs, health services, etc., in other ways . . . will they need political favors?

8. Mass media—should newspapers, TV, magazines tell the truth? Should that be their basic job? Should they have to support themselves by advertising? How else could they get enough money?

9. International relations—how should we want to treat other countries? Should we help them if we have more than they do? Should we work for peace? Can we have peace if we keep building bigger bombs and faster planes? (What does fear do, threats? What about children fighting?)

10. Cultural life—are artists, actors, musicians, and writers important? Why? Should art and acting and music and writing be considered work? Should there be free concerts and free plays for everyone to see? Why?

Concept: It is not simply the changing of the structure of society that will make a good world, but the ethical values of the individual.

What if men were just naturally bad to each other—if they didn't care about each other? Would it matter about the structure of society? Are men good to each other because of laws? What is an ethical value? Would it matter about the structure of society? Are men good to each other because of law? What is an ethical value?

Discuss “do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” Do you have a set of values? Are society's laws enough? Are your own personal “laws” important, too? Are they even more important than society's laws?

*Case Study:* Statements of Discipline of Nonviolent Movements.

Is the movement the germ of a new society? How do people act toward each other in the movement? How do people act toward each other in Freedom School? How does this way of life

differ from the way of life of the larger society? We must keep these good ethical and spiritual values in the new society which we build.

Concept: That there are many kinds of power we could use to build a better society. What is power? (Power is the ability to move things.) What kinds of power are there? Discuss.

### Mississippi

### Freedom Movement

#### Physical Power

(Power to coerce or frighten)

Police state  
Intimidation

Federal intervention

#### Political Power

(Power to influence)

One party  
No vote  
Unjust laws

Vote  
Convention Challenge  
Negro candidates

#### Economic Power

(Power to buy)

Citizens Council  
control, banks, jobs etc

Boycott,  
Strikes

Do these “powers” balance each other? Do they succeed in bringing the two sides together or do they tend to pull apart? Are there other kinds of power?

#### Truth Power

(Power to Convince or Persuade)

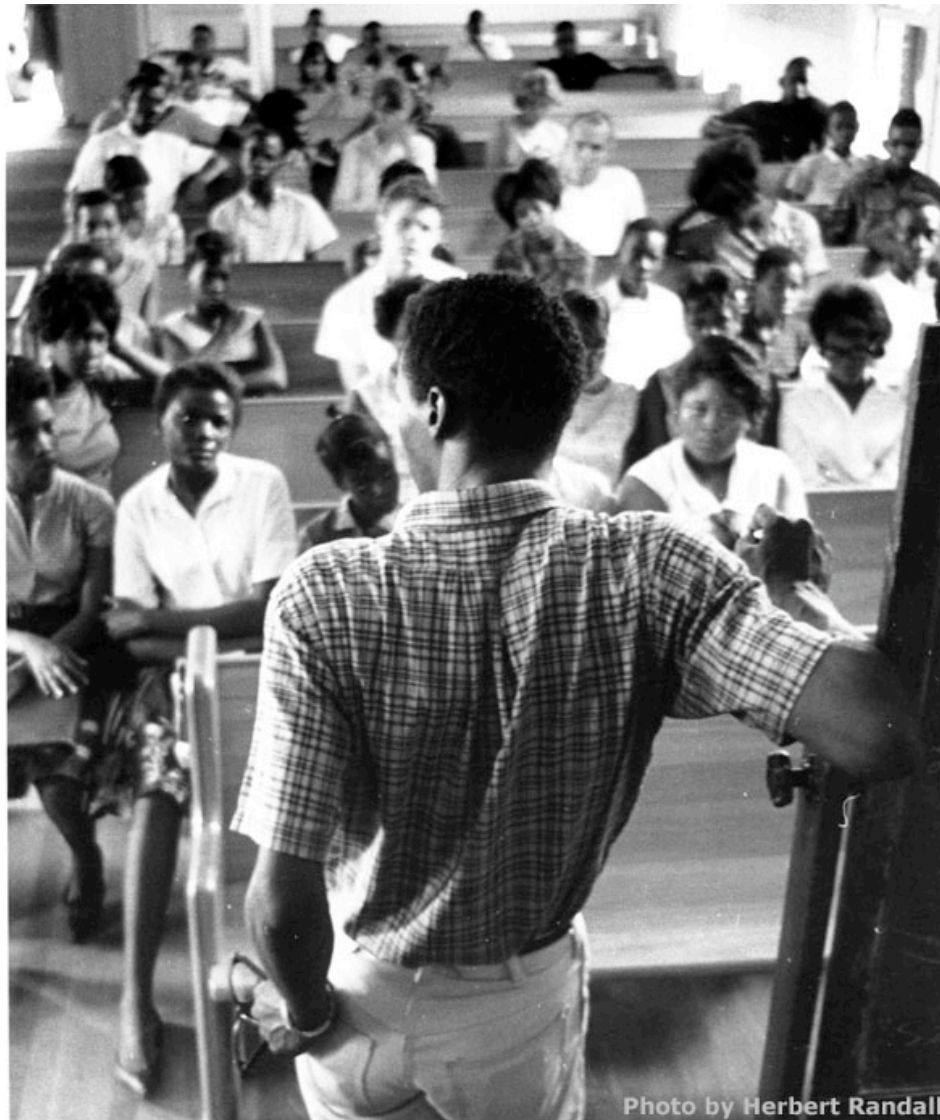
Does persuasion pull people apart? Is it a different kind of power? Can we use truth to reveal the lies and myths? What happens once they are revealed? Once someone is convinced or persuaded, can they join with us? Is the better world for them too?

#### Soul Power

(The Power to Love)

Can you love everyone like you love your family or your friends? What does compassion mean? Is that a kind of love? Is there something in other people that is like what is in you? Can soul power change things? How?

*[Editors' Note: Units I to VI of the Citizenship Curriculum were written by Noel Day, and modified for the Freedom Schools by Jane Stenbridge.]*



*"Sandy Leigh's MFDP lecture"*

## ***PART II: CITIZENSHIP CURRICULUM, UNIT VII—THE MOVEMENT***

**Purpose:** To grasp the significance of direct action and of political action as instruments of social change.

**Materials:** Readings in Nonviolence;

COFO Materials on Freedom Summer;

See: Prospectus for the Mississippi Freedom Summer

COFO Flyer: Freedom Summer

COFO Flyer: MFDP

COFO Flyer: Freedom Registration

Charles Remsberg, "Behind the Cotton Curtain" (excerpts);

Southern Regional Council, report on Greenwood Voter Project;

Voter Registration Laws in Mississippi

*[Inserted by Editors:]* Civil Rights Bill

*[Inserted by Editors:] Rifle Squads or the Beloved Community*

*[Inserted by Editors:] Nonviolence in American History*

*[Inserted by Editors:] Teaching Material for Unit 7, Part II*

### **Unit VII, Part 1: Freedom Rides and Sit-Ins**

QUESTION: What is a Freedom Ride?

ANSWER: A Freedom Ride is a special kind of direct action protest aimed at testing buses, trains, and terminal facilities—to see whether or not the seating of people on buses and trains is done according to law, i.e., the Supreme Court ruling of 1960 that segregated seating on interstate carriers and in terminal stations is illegal.

The second purpose of a Freedom Ride is to protest segregation where it still exists and to make known to the nation the conditions under which Negroes live in the deep South.

The third and overall purpose of the Freedom Ride is to change these conditions.

QUESTION: What happens on a Freedom Ride?

ANSWER: A group of people—in the case of the Freedom Rides—an integrated group buy interstate bus or train tickets. By interstate, we mean going from one state to another. They board the bus or train and sit in seats customarily used by whites only. At stations, they use restrooms customarily used by whites only. They eat at lunch counters customarily used by whites only and sit in waiting rooms customarily reserved by whites.

QUESTION: What is a sit-in?

ANSWER: A sit-in is another kind of direct action protest aimed at breaking down racial barriers in restaurants, dining rooms, and any places where whites are allowed to sit, but Negroes are not.

QUESTION: What happens on a sit-in?

ANSWER: People go and sit at lunch counters, in dime stores and drugstores, etc. They usually sit and refuse to move. When this happens, they are sometimes arrested or sometimes the whole lunch-counter closes down and nobody—neither Negro nor white—gets to sit and eat.

QUESTION: What do Freedom Rides and sit-ins want to do?

ANSWER: They want to make it possible for people to sit where they choose, ride where they choose, and eat where they choose. *They want to change society*, and we call these two forms of protest “instruments of social change.”

QUESTION: What is society?

ANSWER: Society is the way people live together. People get together and they decide certain things they want—like schools and banks, parks and stores, buses and trains. We call all these things *social institutions* because they are the things people *build* as they live together.

QUESTION: Why do some people want to change society?

ANSWER: Sometimes, people build bad institutions. A bad institution is anything that keeps people from living together and sharing. Segregation is a bad institution. It is a bad thing that a few people have built in order to keep other people outside. In the South, in places like Mississippi, the whole society has become one big evil institution—segregation. If a good society is one where people live together and share things . . . then a segregated society is the exact

opposite of a good society—because the whole purpose of segregation is to keep people separate. Segregation means separation and separation means a very bad society. That is what people want to change.

QUESTION: How can you change society?

ANSWER: You can tear down the bad institutions which people have built and replace them with new institutions that help people live together and share.

There are different ways of tearing down bad institutions. You can write to the President or Congressman and ask them to help get rid of bad institutions. They can make a law against those institutions. For example, after the Freedom Rides, there was a law made by which we can force buses and stations to desegregate. (ICC Ruling, September 22, 1961)

Also, in 1954, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that segregated schools were unconstitutional. A Negro took the case to the Supreme Court.

So, you can try to get laws passed. Or, you can persuade people to stop building bad institutions. You can go and talk to the white people who make segregated schools and maybe you can help them to see that this is wrong and maybe they will change it without having to be told to by the government.

QUESTION: Does this really work?

ANSWER: It does not work very quickly . . . and Negroes have waited too long. Unfortunately, people don't change easily. Unfortunately, the government does not pass new laws very readily.

QUESTION: Then what can you do?

ANSWER: You can compel things to change.

QUESTION: How?

ANSWER: You can refuse to keep evil laws. You can refuse to cooperate with bad institutions. You can refuse to cooperate with segregation. That is what the Freedom Riders and the sit-inners did—exactly.

The Freedom Riders said we will not keep that law which says we have to sit in the back of a bus because we are Negro. That law is wrong. It is wrong because all men were created equal. It is wrong because Negroes are citizens of the United States and the Constitution of the United States says that no law can be made which takes away the freedom of any citizen. Since the law about sitting in the back of the bus takes away our freedom, we will not sit there. We will sit in the front, or in the middle, or wherever we choose because we have tickets and we have the right. The students who went to sit-in at the dime store lunch counters said we shop in this store and so we are customers of this store, so we will eat there.

QUESTION: Is there another way of changing things?

ANSWER: Yes, there is a way we don't support: to get a gun and go down to the station and take over the whole station.

QUESTION: Why didn't the Freedom Riders do that?

ANSWER: For two reasons. First of all, it won't work. Not for long. Because there are always people with bigger guns and more bullets. The Negroes in America are a minority and they cannot win by guns.

The second reason the Freedom Riders did not take guns is that when you use guns, you are building just another bad institution. Guns separate people from each other, keep them from living together and sharing . . . and for this reason *guns never really change society*. They might get rid of one bad institution—but only by building another bad institution. So you do not accomplish any good whatsoever.

In the South, the white men are masters over the Negroes. No man—Negro or white—has the right to be master of another man . . . and the whole purpose of the integration movement is to bring people together, to stop letting white men be masters over Negroes . . . what good would it do, then, to take a gun?

It is true that whoever has the gun is a kind of master for a while. It is also true that the best society is one in which nobody is master and everyone is free.

And, it is further true that there is a weapon which is much better and much stronger than a gun or a bomb. That weapon is nonviolence.

QUESTION: Why is nonviolence a stronger weapon?

ANSWER: Nonviolence really changes things—because nonviolence changes people.

Nonviolence is based on a simple truth: that every human being deserves to be treated as human being just because he is one and that there is something very sacred about humanity.

When you treat a man as a man, most often he will begin to act like a man. By treating him as that which he should be, he sees what he should be and often becomes that. He literally changes and as men change, society changes . . . on the deepest level.

Real change occurs inside of people. Then they, in turn, change society. You do not really change a man by holding a gun on him . . . you do not change him into a better man. But by treating him as a human being, you do change him. It is simply true that nonviolence changes men—both those who act without violence and those who receive the action.

The white people in the South and in America have to be changed—very deep inside.

Nonviolence has and will bring about this change in people . . . and in society.

QUESTION: What exactly did the Freedom Rides accomplish?

ANSWER: For one thing, because of the Freedom Rides, the Interstate Commerce Commission made a ruling by which a bus or train or station can be made to desegregate. This ruling came in September of 1961 just after the Freedom Rides.

QUESTION: Why didn't the ICC make that rule a long time ago? Why were the Freedom Rides necessary?

ANSWER: Sometimes, with governments, you have to show them a thing a thousand times before they see it once and before they do something about it. Way back in 1862, Abraham Lincoln wrote the Emancipation Proclamation. But Negroes still are not free. Just because there is a law on paper, it doesn't mean there is justice.

The Supreme Court said in 1960 that buses and trains and stations had to desegregate for interstate passengers. But in the South, nobody did anything about it. So, the Freedom Riders came to show the nation and the government that they would have to do something else. They would have to enforce the Supreme Court ruling. As a result of the Freedom Rides, the ICC enforcement was passed. If it had not been for the Freedom Rides, the ICC would have waited a long time and maybe forever to do anything.



QUESTION: Why?

ANSWER: Unfortunately, governments do not do anything until the people get up and say they have to. What happened with the Freedom Rides and the sit-ins was that Negroes were tired asking the government to do something . . . tired of writing letters and going through the slow process of the courts to get laws changed . . . tired of making speeches that never accomplished anything. SO THEY ACTED. We call the Freedom Rides and the sit-ins “DIRECT ACTION.”

QUESTION: What is direct action?

ANSWER: Direct action is just another way of telling the world what is wrong. The special thing about direct action is that it makes use of the human body—instead of just the voice or the mind. Direct action is putting your body in the way of evil—placing your whole self on the very spot where injustice is.

A segregated lunch counter is wrong. So, people went and sat down in the middle of it. They put their bodies in the way and they were saying: here I am in the middle of your lunch counter and I will not move because your lunch counter is all wrong. It is segregated. Either you will desegregate it (make a new institution) or you will just have to close it altogether (destroy an old institution) . . . I am not moving.

Direct action is putting your body in the way of evil and refusing to move until the evil is destroyed, until the wrong is made right.

Direct action is saying, with your body, either you will have an integrated lunch counter or none at all. AND THIS IS WHAT HAPPENED. All over the South, lunch counters began to close to everybody. If it opened for everybody, the sit-inners had succeeded in destroying something evil and building up something good. If it closed to everybody, at least the sit-inners had succeeded in getting rid of something evil.

That is the power of direct action. We call Freedom Rides and sit-ins direct action.

QUESTION: What really happened on the Freedom Rides?

ANSWER: Negro and white students working with CORE in Washington, D.C. and places like that decided that somebody ought to come down South and see if the Supreme Court law had made any difference and, if not, to tell the world about it. They felt that everybody should know about Alabama and Mississippi and how Negroes are treated in these places. All over the South, students were sitting-in at lunch counters and restaurants, courtrooms and offices. They had been doing other things in addition to sitting in. They had staged wade-ins at swimming pools, sleep-ins at hotels, stand-ins at theaters, kneel-ins at churches. They had picketed and marched, gone to jail. Already victories were being won.

It was time to try out the buses and trains. The students in Washington knew two things: one, they had every right to sit where they wanted because they were human beings and two, that the law said every citizen who is riding on an interstate carrier can sit where he chooses both on the bus and in the station.

All they needed was an interstate bus ticket. They each bought a ticket. The first Freedom Riders bought tickets from Washington, D.C. to New Orleans, Louisiana. On May 4, 1961, they left—thirteen of them, seven were Negro and six white. One interracial team rode on Trailways Bus and the other on Greyhound.

They went through Virginia and Tennessee without much real trouble. They came into Alabama. The trouble started. About six miles outside of a town called Anniston, a white mob was waiting for the buses. The Greyhound bus got there first and the mob attacked. They slashed tires, threw

gas in and set the whole bus on fire. Many people were hurt very badly. When the Trailways bus arrived, the mob tried to get it. This bus was able to escape and made it on to Birmingham—only to meet a white mob at the Birmingham station. The Freedom Riders were beaten up.

Police and patrolmen escorted the bus all the way from Birmingham to the Mississippi line. The bus came to Jackson. Police were waiting. As soon as the Freedom Riders got into the white waiting room, the police picked them up and took them to the city jail in Jackson. From the city jail, they were moved to the Hinds County jail, from there to the county farm and finally to Parchman State Penitentiary, where they served their time rather than cooperate with the state by paying bail money.

During that spring three years ago, more than a thousand students made the Freedom Rides. Most of them were either beaten up or arrested or both. Bill Mahoney, a Negro student from Washington, was one of the Freedom Riders who spent a long, long time in Parchman. Bill wrote about how badly they were treated there and how they refused to eat and refused to cooperate in any way. In spite of everything they suffered, these Freedom Riders at Parchman were determined to stick to their belief in the power of nonviolence. One day, Bill and some of the other prisoners, wrote this prison code which they all followed:

“Having, after due consideration, chosen to follow without reservation, the principles of nonviolence, we resolve while in prison:

- \* to practice nonviolence of speech and thought as well as action;
- \* to treat even those who may be our captors as brothers;
- \* to engage in a continual process of cleansing of the mind and body in rededication to our wholesome cause;
- \* to intensify our search for orderly living even when in the midst of seeming chaos.”

So this is what happened on the Freedom Rides. Sometimes Riders would go back and tell everything that had taken place. Sometimes, they would write about it and tell the government in Washington. Before it was all over, the whole world knew how bad things really were in such places as Alabama and Mississippi. AND TODAY, because of the Freedom Riders, most of the bus and train stations in the South are open to everybody. For those stations which are not opened on an integrated basis, there is now a ruling by which we can force them to open. This ruling was the direct result of the Freedom Rides.

Bill Mahoney and his group got out of Parchman Penitentiary on the seventh day of July in 1961. This is what he said about that day, “When we left, the number of Freedom Riders still in jail was close to a hundred. Before parting for our various destinations, we stood in a circle, grasped hands, and sang a song called “We Will Meet Again.” As I looked around the circle into my companions’ serious faces and saw the furrowed brows of the nineteen- or twenty-year-old men and women, I knew that we *would* meet again.

QUESTION: Did the Freedom Rides succeed? If so, how?

ANSWER: The Rides succeeded in five important ways:

- a. They showed clearly that it is not enough just to make a law; that simply because the Supreme Court says it is wrong to have segregated bus stations, these stations do not integrate overnight (e.g. 1954 Supreme Court decision on public schools.)
- b. They showed the terrible truth about the deep South.

c. They showed those people who think social change can be made without suffering that they are wrong.

d. They brought the fight for freedom into the deep South,

e. They forced the Interstate Commerce Commission to do something—which it did on

September 22, 1961. The ruling went into effect on November 1, 1961.

NOTE: As late as July 20, 1961, the Justice Department reported segregation in ninety-seven of the 294 terminals in twelve of the seventeen states surveyed. After the November 1 order, there were very few still segregated.

QUESTION: What about Mississippi?

ANSWER: All over Mississippi we still see signs like “Colored Waiting Room” and “For Whites Only” in stations. We still see Negroes going into sections where they are told to go. And, in some towns, if you protest, you are arrested or worse.

QUESTION: Why?

ANSWER: Because Mississippi makes its own laws. It does not keep the law of the United States, not when it comes to race. This means if you go to a white waiting room, and some policeman tells you it is against the law—he is right. It is against the law. It is against Mississippi law.

QUESTION: So what do you do?

ANSWER: You break that law. You break it because it is both evil and is against the Supreme Court of the United States—which is the Law of the whole land.

You act on two higher laws—the law of human rights and the law of civil rights, because you are a human being and because you are a citizen of the United States.

QUESTION: What will happen?

ANSWER: In a sense, you do not even ask what will happen. You simply do what is right because it is right. Mississippi is a bad place. It is not easy to do the right thing in Mississippi. A lot can happen to you. But a lot happened to the first Freedom Riders and the students who first went to the white lunch counters. They did it anyway.

THE IMPORTANT THING IS THIS—unless we keep going and keep going to these places WHERE THE LAW HAS ALREADY BEEN PASSED IN OUR FAVOR—we will be cooperating with those people who want to keep us down. Every time you go into the “Colored” section, you are saying that Mississippi is right.

When you say Mississippi is right, you are saying one thing and one thing only: I am wrong. If Mississippi is right, then Negroes *are* inferior.

No, Mississippi is dead wrong. BUT YOU HAVE TO SAY SO. Every time you go to the back door, you are building up segregation. Mississippi likes to say “our Negroes are happy. They do not want changes.”

And every time you go where they want you to go, you are saying exactly the same thing. And it is not true.

QUESTION: Then what?

ANSWER: Then, if you are arrested, you get in touch with as many people as you can—COFO, the Department of Justice, the Department of Commerce, lawyers, the Civil Rights commission.

You appeal the case. You file suit against the state of Mississippi. You get the case into a federal court and out of the state courts. You fight it until some court orders that bus station to desegregate, and sees that it does.

QUESTION: Has anybody ever done this in Mississippi?

ANSWER: Yes. A Negro in McComb, Mississippi filed a suit against the state, asking that the bus station in McComb be forced to desegregate. Recently, U.S. District Court Judge Sidney Mize issued an injunction against the state to force them to stop segregating that bus station. We will do this to every station in every town in Mississippi if we have to. The Freedom Rides did a lot, but they were only a beginning. They got the law completely on our side. It is up to us to use that law and force a change in Mississippi.

QUESTION: What is the story on the sit-ins?

ANSWER: The sit-ins, as we know them, began on February 1, 1960, when four freshmen from North Carolina A. and T. College in Greensboro, North Carolina took seats at Woolworth's Dime Store in downtown Greensboro.

Within a week, the sit-in movement had spread to seven other towns in North Carolina and within six weeks, the movement covered every southern state except Mississippi.

The first success came on the seventh of March, 1960—only five weeks after the very first sit-in. On March 7, three drugstores in Salisbury, North Carolina desegregated their lunch counters. Sit-ins continued and increased all that summer. By September, it was estimated that 70,000 students had been in sit-ins in every southern state as well as Nevada, Illinois, and Ohio; and that 3,600 had been arrested.

AND that one or more eating places in 108 southern cities had been desegregated *as a result of the sit-ins*. (Southern Regional Council figures.)

To grasp the happenings of 1960, you must feel the revolutionary spirit which swept across the campuses of hundreds of Negro colleges and high schools in the South. Four students went to Woolworth's. Then twenty went in another town. Then, 200 went in a third town. It spread like wildfire—unplanned, spontaneous, revolutionary. Within a week after the first sit-ins, the entire South was in an uproar. It was like a volcano had erupted, cracking through the earth and flooding the plain.

SO SEGREGATION BEGAN TO BREAK DOWN. The old institutions crumbled. The new society was being created. A fantastic spirit was felt—people went to jail, left schools, left home, filled the streets and jails. The seams which had for so long held together the rotten system broke completely and the people came pouring out. There was no way to stop them.

Police tried. Parents tried. Teachers tried. The South tried. They did not stop. Every attempt to stop them only increased their determination. Until thousands of students became involved that summer of 1960 . . . and the South and the nation began to listen. They had to listen. These students put their bodies in the way and would not move.

THAT is how they got the attention of the world.

Once they had got the world's attention, they never let it go. The minute somebody would forget about them and turn the other way, the students would do something new. There was fantastic creativity. Sit-ins gave birth to kneel-ins and to wade-ins and to sleep-ins.

The students were everywhere . . . and nobody could forget them. Nobody could forget the Negro and his grievances. If a man went to the movie to escape the sit-in at the lunch counter, he ran into the line of stand-inners at the movie. If he went to the hotel to sleep, there they were.

Everywhere . . . everywhere so that nobody would forget for one minute that the American Negro wanted his freedom and wanted it right then and there.

Students who were involved in those early days can talk on and on all day—can tell you what happened in Nashville the morning in May when 3,000 students marched in silence to the Mayor's office to present their demands, can tell you what happened in Orangeburg on Black Friday when hundreds of students from South Carolina State and Claflin Colleges were thrown in stockades and crushed with water from fire hoses, can tell you about North Carolina opening up, and Virginia closing its schools, and Alabama fighting back, about a thousand little lunch counters in a thousand towns across the South, can tell you how society began to change, how southern society began to collapse altogether, can tell you about nonviolence and about violence because they felt plenty of violence in jails and on the streets of America.

And all of this is still happening. It is just beginning to happen in Mississippi. We are living in the middle of the revolution and in the middle of a new history. . . .

When you talk about what happened in the sit-in movement, you are talking about a living moving force that still exists. Because of the great dynamic of the movement, one cannot do more than capture a moment here and there, a victory in Greensboro, an event in Atlanta, . . . one can talk about the songs and the people who make up this movement . . . but most of all, one can feel the spirit.

Some special things which happened can be described now—such as the spring of 1960 when it all began and the birth of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee—"Snick."

QUESTION: What is the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee?

ANSWER: SNCC is a group of students who work full-time for civil rights, all over America.

QUESTION: How did it begin?

ANSWER: The first sit-in was in February. In six weeks, the movement was covering the South. In April, Miss Ella Baker, who had been fighting for the rights of Negroes for many years, arranged for the sit-inners to come to Atlanta and talk about what was happening. So they came—right from jail, many of them, and met each other for the first time. For the first time, together, we sang "We Shall Overcome" . . . and for the first time, we recognized that we had begun a revolution. The students who came to that meeting wanted a committee that would stay in touch with all the towns where things were happening, would tell the nation, and would help keep things going through the summer. Each state named someone to be on this committee, which was called the Temporary Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.

SNCC met each month that summer, opened an office in Atlanta, started a newspaper called *The Student Voice*, and made plans for a southwide student movement conference to be held in the fall.

At that October 1960 conference, SNCC was made a permanent committee. SNCC today has its headquarters in Atlanta still, with offices in every state in the South and Friends of SNCC offices all over the north and west. SNCC has offices in every major town in the state of Mississippi.

And this summer, more than 2000 people will be working for SNCC.

That's a long way since June 1960 when we set up an office in the corner of another office and there were only two of us then.

QUESTION: What does SNCC do in Mississippi?

ANSWER: In Mississippi, SNCC is part of the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO), which is all the people who want freedom. COFO has two main purposes in Mississippi: voter registration and education.

QUESTION: Do we have sit-ins in Mississippi?

ANSWER: Yes, there have been sit-ins in Mississippi—and, of course, the Freedom Rides came through and were stopped in Mississippi. In Jackson, students of Tougaloo College, have been kneeling-in at Jackson churches all year. Many people have been arrested.

The people have concentrated on other things in Mississippi. There have been very few direct action protests, such as sit-ins, in comparison with other southern states.

QUESTION: Why are people doing a different thing in Mississippi?

ANSWER: They are operating differently in Mississippi because Mississippi is different. Mississippi is the worst state in the South as far as treatment of Negroes is concerned. The thing that makes Mississippi different and worse, even than Alabama, is that every single thing the state has is designed to keep the Negro down.

Before Mississippi changes, there will have to be a well-planned and very strong movement among the Negro people. COFO, the people's organization, is building up that movement. It just takes more "getting ready" in Mississippi.

The second thing people are doing in Mississippi is making up for lost time. All these years when Negroes had to live under the awful conditions in Mississippi, they lost the chance for good education. They lost the chance to understand government and to help run it—political education. They lost the chance to vote. Or better, they never had a chance for these things. COFO is building up good freedom schools so people can have that chance. COFO is having FREEDOM VOTES so Negroes can vote. COFO is helping the Negroes of Mississippi run their own candidates for Senate and congress in the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.

In Mississippi, COFO is thinking first of helping the people who want freedom get some control in the state and gain a voice in the government of Mississippi.

When Negroes have a vote, then they can help make the laws. And when Negroes make the laws . . . they will get rid of all the segregation laws. They will get rid of segregated lunch counters. They will get rid of the walls that hurt people—black and white.

There are several ways to desegregate a lunch counter. One is by sitting in, or what we call direct action. Another way is by voting for people who will themselves desegregate the lunch counter . . . this is a kind of indirect action.

It is very good to desegregate a lunch counter—but it is good also to be elected to the United States Congress. Mrs. Hamer, a Negro lady from Ruleville, is running for Congress on the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. Once we get good people from Mississippi in Congress, then they will change the laws.

QUESTION: Why doesn't COFO do both—direct action and indirect action?

ANSWER: They do both. It is true that there are not many sit-ins in Mississippi. One reason for this is that there would be so much violence. Students got beaten up for sitting-in in Alabama—they would likely be killed in Mississippi. Rather than subject people to certain violence for the sake of a lunch counter, COFO asks people to go to the registrar office and try to become registered voters. This is hard enough. This is direct action as far as Mississippi is

concerned . . . and, if you get the vote, you have gotten something much more powerful than a lunch counter seat in the long run.

QUESTION: How can Mississippi society be changed?

ANSWER: It will take every tactic we have. Sooner or later, we will have to try all these ways of changing society: sit-ins, marches, kneel-ins, pickets, boycotts, voting, running people for Congress, Freedom Schools to prepare young Negroes to lead, literacy classes to teach people to read and write—everything will be needed to change Mississippi.

This is the reason for COFO. COFO is all the people who want freedom working together to change Mississippi.

QUESTION: Even with all this, how can we hope to win in Mississippi?

ANSWER: We won't win, at least not for a very long time, unless the federal government throws its weight behind us.

Howard Zinn, writing in the winter issue of *Freedomways* states quite clearly: "I am now convinced that stone wall which blocks expectant Negroes in every town and village of the hard-core South . . . will have to be crumbled by hammer blows. . . ." Zinn sees two ways for this to happen: one would be a violent Negro revolt; the other would be forceful intervention of the federal government—and, Zinn continues, unless this latter happens in such places as Mississippi, the former surely will.

The federal government does *not* have a good record in Mississippi. Time and again, in fact hourly, Negroes are denied those basic freedoms guaranteed them by the United States Constitution, by the Bill of Rights, by Section 242 of U.S. Criminal Code . . . and the federal government has done very little. (Section 242 of the U.S. Criminal Code, which comes from the Civil Rights Act of 1866, creates a legal basis for action and prosecution, says Zinn. The Section reads: "Whoever, under color of any law . . . willfully subjects . . . any inhabitant of any State . . . to the deprivation of any rights, privileges, or immunities secured or protected by the Constitution and the laws of the United States. . . .")

Zinn continues: "The responsibility is that of the President of the United States, and no one else. *It is his job to enforce the law. And the law is clear.*"

The wall which the state of Mississippi has thrown between Negroes and whites cannot be broken down by us alone—it is too high and too thick. It will take the power of the United States to break that wall *plus* the power of the people of Mississippi.

QUESTION: What can we do to force the federal government to help us?

ANSWER: We can continue working constantly to show the world how horrible Mississippi is, and continue trying to change it. We can put pressure on the federal government—by constantly writing the President and the Attorney General and members of the Civil Rights Commission, by going to Washington every chance we have and showing the President what we want.

That is the meaning of the March on Washington which took place last August. Hundreds of thousands of Negroes marched, with whites, to show the government that we are not free and that it must do something about the fact that we are not free. Mississippi people went on that March—and they carried signs, they talked about Mississippi, they got on radio and television—so the nation would know the truth and *do something*.

Our job this summer is to keep on telling America to do something about injustice in Mississippi. And our job is to keep doing something ourselves. We cannot afford to stop until we are free.

The favorite freedom song of the people of Mississippi has these lines:

We shall never turn back  
Until we have been freed  
And we have equality  
And we have equality. . . .

QUESTION: What has happened in Mississippi so far?

ANSWER: The Mississippi story really begins to take shape in the summer of 1960. Robert Moses, a young Negro teacher from New York, came to Atlanta and went to work for SNCC. In July, he first came into Mississippi to try and find students who would come to Atlanta for a big meeting with other Negro students from all over the South. He did find Mississippi students, and some came to the Atlanta meeting. After that meeting, they returned to the state and Bob returned to his teaching in New York. All that year, Bob kept thinking about Mississippi and the students in Mississippi kept thinking about the things they had heard from Bob and from other Negro students in the meeting. After that school year was over, Bob came back to Mississippi. Negro leaders in southwest Mississippi had been wanting to start a citizenship school and a voter registration drive. Bob went down to help. During that summer, he worked in Amite County, Pike County, and Walthall County. Some people were registered, some were beaten, some were killed. The center of the work down there was McComb and the story of McComb is a very important story—because it is largely about high school students.

Things began to happen in a big way on August 18, 1961. The people formed the Pike County Nonviolent Movement. Eight days later, Elmer Hayes and Hollis Watkins went to Woolworth's lunch counter and sat in. **THIS WAS THE FIRST DIRECT ACTION IN MISSISSIPPI.** Hayes and Watkins were arrested and jailed for thirty days for breach of the peace. Four days later there was a sit-in in the bus station. Three students were arrested—two of them were high school students: Isaac Lewis and Brenda Travis, sixteen. Their charges were breach of the peace and failure to move on. They got 28 days in the city jail.

Toward the end of September, Mr. Herbert Lee, Negro farmer and voter registration worker in Liberty, was killed. On the 3rd of October, there was a mass meeting. Many, many high school students attended. They had something important to decide.

This was what they had to decide—when Brenda Travis and Ike Lewis, their classmates, got arrested for sitting in at the bus station, the principal of their high school, Burgland High, threatened to expel any students who got involved in sit-ins. The students got mad. They came to this mass meeting. They decided that if Brenda and Ike were not re-admitted to Burgland High, they would protest. Brenda and Ike were not re-admitted. So the very next day, the high school students marched: one hundred and twenty of them right down through McComb and up to the City Hall.

And here is what those high school students said:

We, the Negro youth of Pike County, feel that Brenda Travis and Ike Lewis should not be barred from acquiring an education for protesting an injustice. We feel that as members of Burgland High School they have fought this battle for us. To prove that we appreciate their having done this, we will suffer with them any punishment they have to take.

In the schools we are taught democracy, but the rights offered by democracy have been denied us by our oppressors; we have not had a balanced school system; we have not had an opportunity to participate in any of the branches of our local, state, and federal government; however, we are



children of God, who makes the sun shine on the just and the unjust. So, we petition all our fellowmen to love rather than hate, to build rather than tear down, to bind our nation with love and justice with regard to race, color, or creed.

Those Negro high school students were arrested—all of them—on that morning when they marched through McComb. Some were released on suspended sentences because they were too young. Those of age were sentenced and fined. Brenda Travis was sent to the girls' detention home for a year. And seventy-five of the other high school students transferred to Campbell College in Jackson, rather than go back to Burgland High.

That is McComb and the first big march in Mississippi. Since that summer, three years ago, the people of Mississippi—who want to be free—have stood up again and again to demand their rights. All over Mississippi, Negroes have gone to the courthouses seeking to become registered voters. Some have succeeded. Most have not.

In Jackson, students and ministers who support them, from all over the country have gone to the churches of Jackson and asked to worship together. They have been arrested for this—hundreds of them. Some churches have opened. Most have not.

And this summer—the people of Mississippi who want to be free are having a whole summer called THE MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM SUMMER. This means Freedom Schools for all students who want to learn about civil rights and to talk about the things they can't talk about in regular school. Freedom Schools are a big part of the Mississippi Freedom Summer.

Another part is voter registration. All summer long people will keep on going to the courthouses of Mississippi and demanding to be registered as voters. In addition to regular registration, the people will have FREEDOM REGISTRATION. Freedom Registration is a chance for Negroes in Mississippi to show the world that they want to register and vote.

QUESTION: What else will the people be doing in Mississippi this summer?

ANSWER: The people will have their own community centers. A community center is a place where everyone can do many different things. It will be mostly for adults and will offer many chances for them to learn things to help them live better. The centers will have job training programs, classes for people who cannot read or write, health programs, adult education and Negro history classes, music, drama and arts and crafts workshops.

QUESTION: What else will happen during the Freedom Summer?

ANSWER: The people who want to be free will have their own candidates running for office. These are our candidates. They are running in the Freedom Democratic Party. That is our party. The people of Mississippi have refused to cooperate with segregation. They are tearing down that old and evil institution and building new institutions—a new society where men can live together and share. That is the Mississippi story. . .

And it is a story of victory. It is a story of great suffering and death. Names like Clyde Kennard, Emmett Till, Medgar Evers, Herbert Lee, Lewis Allen. Like the sit-in movement, we have our stories of suffering and jail, of death and terrible suffering. And we have our songs of freedom . . . and our determination to BE free.

As far as Negroes are concerned, and as far as many poor whites are concerned . . . Mississippi is the worst state in America. But the people of Mississippi have done and are doing a great thing. They have built a new society, a statewide people's movement and for the first time, the nation is about to see what it means to have government of the people, by the people, for the people. . . .

All across the South the walls have begun to fall. And in Mississippi, where things are so much worse, there is a whole new society taking shape. It is partly because things are so much worse here that the people have had the will and determination to build so much better. When the last stone of the wall called Jim Crow has fallen, the last evil institution collapsed . . . we will already have built the foundation of a new society where men can live without fear.

## Unit VII, Part 2: Mississippi's Politics and COFO's Political Program in Mississippi

(Presented in question and answer form under topical headings.)

### INTRODUCTION

- I. COFO—The Organization
  - A. What is COFO?
  - B. What are the Programs sponsored by COFO?
  - C. How did COFO get started?
- II. Mrs. Hamer's Campaign
  - A. Who is Mrs. Hamer
  - B. Why is she running for office?
  - C. What is Mrs. Hamer's Platform?
  - D. Who is her opponent?
  - E. How is the campaign to be conducted?
  - F. Has she any chance of winning?

If not, why challenge?
- III. Other COFO Political Programs for the summer
  - A. How will the Democratic Convention be challenged?
  - B. What are the plans for the Freedom Registration?
  - C. The Freedom Candidates?
- IV. Voting in Mississippi
  - A. How is the state Democratic Party organized?
  - B. What are the voting requirements?
  - C. Who votes in Mississippi?
  - D. What are the proofs of discrimination in voting?
  - E. Why isn't the Negro allowed to vote? What does the white man fear?
  - F. What steps have been taken to give Negroes the vote?
- V. Historical Development of white, one-party politics
  - A. What role did Reconstruction play?
  - B. Who controls the votes and how?
  - C. Why hasn't the Republican party been stronger?
  - D. What changes will occur when Negroes can vote?

### Introduction

The following will provide a background of information from which it is hoped the teacher in the Freedom School will be able to direct a discussion and set up a situation in which dialogue will be possible on the subject of politics and its relation to the individual and to groups—especially politics in Mississippi. As part of this, the development of COFO, its aims and purposes as a political action group, will also be discussed.

The approach that will be taken is to use the example of Mrs. Hamer's campaign for Representative to the U.S. House as a point of departure for discussion of the political situation in the state. It is hoped that through the use of a specific case study, the students may see the political structure as relevant and close to his own experience. That even more importantly, the

students may be awakened to the essential role each individual plays in the democratic process, what this role is, and how to go about exercising his right to a voice in the decision making that concerns his life. Beyond this, by studying Mrs. Hamer's campaign and the broader aspects of COFO's political program for the summer and beyond, the student may see one example of how to combat the problems of discrimination that take his right away to have a voice in local, state and national government.

The basic concepts which it is important to get across from this unit are these:

1. Fundamentals of how the political structure is organized at local, state, and national level.
2. How the individual participates in politics and why it is important.
3. How the political structure in Mississippi is organized to discriminate against the Negro and why?
4. What steps can and are being taken to correct existing conditions of discrimination.

### I.COFO

QUESTION: What is COFO?

ANSWER: COFO is the Council of Federated Organizations—a federation of all the national civil rights organizations active in Mississippi, local political and action groups and some fraternal and social organizations.

QUESTION: Why have such a federation of organizations?

ANSWER: To create unity and to give a sense of continuity to Civil Rights efforts in the state. Particularly since any civil rights program must be carried out in an atmosphere of extreme hostility from the white community, it was felt that unity through an organization of this kind would create a bond of support for Negroes all over the state. COFO also provides a sense of identity and purpose to local political action groups already existing and a means of exchanging ideas. One of its major purposes is to develop leadership in local communities all over the state. In the past people have *belonged* to civil rights organizations. COFO would like to be an organization which in a real sense *belongs to the people*. It is so structured that all decision making is done democratically and directly by all the groups working together—allowing each individual the right of voicing his opinion and making his vote count.

Decisions concerning COFO are made at its state-wide convention meetings, which are called when necessary. Anyone active under any of the organizations which make up membership is entitled to attend COFO conventions and participate in policy-making decisions of the organization.

The staff consists of anyone working full time with any civil rights organization in Mississippi. This staff carries out the decisions of the COFO convention and prepares recommendations for its consideration. Below the state COFO convention there are district organizations corresponding to the five congressional districts. These district organizations are only in the planning state at present. The staff is divided into congressional districts with five district directors; this organizational structure is functioning at present.

The state organization has four standing committees: Welfare and Relief, Political Action, Finance and Federal Programs. The district organizations have or will have, similar standing committees. Dr. Aaron E. Henry of Clarksdale, State President of the NAACP, is President of the Council of Federated Organizations. Robert Moses, Field Secretary and Mississippi Project Director for SNCC, is the Program Director, who supervises the Mississippi staff and is elected

by it. David Dennis, Mississippi Field Secretary for CORE, is Assistant Program Director, and is similarly elected.

QUESTION: What are the programs sponsored by COFO?

ANSWER: COFO works in two major areas. 1) Political 2) Educational and social. The educational and social programs are the Freedom Schools, Federal Programs, Literacy, Work-study, Food and Clothing and Community Centers. Some of these are in operation; others are in the process of being developed.

*Freedom Schools* are planned for the summer of 1964. There are several things which hopefully will be accomplished by the Schools. (1) to provide remedial instruction in basic educational skills but more importantly (2) to implant habits of free thinking and ideas of how a free society works, and (3) to lay the groundwork for a statewide youth movement.

*Federal Programs Project* is to make the programs of the Federal government which are designed to alleviate poverty and ignorance reach the people of Mississippi. The federal programs include the Area Redevelopment Act, the Manpower Development and Training Act, the bureau of the Farmers Home Administration and the Office of Manpower, Automation and Training. You may ask why it is necessary for COFO to be concerned about the administration of federal programs, which are by definition, desegregated and anti-discriminatory. As things now stand the normal channel of information—the state agencies—do not properly present these programs. The State of Mississippi is not reconciled to the desegregated nature of these programs, so Negroes are not allowed to participate. Because of this, private agencies, such as COFO, must act as liaison between the federal program and the people they are designed to help.

*The Literacy Project* at Tougaloo College is a research project under the direction of John Diebold and Associates Company, and is financed by an anonymous grant to the college. The goal of the project is to write self-instructional materials which will teach adult illiterates in lower social and economic groups to read and write.

*The Work-Study Project* is an attempt to solve the pressing staff problems in Southern movement—the conflict between full-time civil rights work and school for the college age worker. Under the work-study program, students spend a year in full-time field work for SNCC, under the direction of COFO field staff, and with special academic work designed to complement their field work and keep them familiar with learning and intellectual discipline. After this year of field work, they get a full scholarship to Tougaloo College for one year.

*Food, Clothing, and Shelter Programs* is a privately financed distribution program of the necessities of life for persons whose needs are so basic that they cannot feed their families one meal a day per person. This welfare services aspect of COFO grew partly out of a need to provide for families who are leaving the plantations sometimes because of automation and sometimes because of their activities in voter registration projects, particularly in the Delta.

The food intake of most poor rural Mississippians is at some times sufficient. These times are usually (1) when they receive government commodities, (2) when the tenant or low-income farmer receives money from his cotton and other minor crops, usually in early and mid-fall, and (3) when landlords give credit to tenant families usually from late March to July. The rest of the time the poor rural families and the unemployed often go hungry.

The clothing situation of both the urban and rural poor is desperate. But the problem is not as difficult in summer months, when the weather is warm, as it is in winter, when the children must have warm clothes to go to school.

Many people in the deep South live in housing unfit for human habitation. In Mississippi over 50 percent of the rural occupied farm housing is classified as deteriorating or dilapidated. More than 50 percent of the rural homes in Mississippi have no piped water and more than 75 percent have no flush toilets, bathtubs or showers. COFO hopes to begin a program of home repair workshops and volunteer youth corps assisting people to repair their homes, all working out of a community center.

*The Community Centers* is to be a network of community centers across the state. It is conceived as a long-range institution. The centers will provide a structure for a sweeping range of recreational and educational programs.

In doing this, they will not only serve basic needs of Negro communities now ignored by the state's political structure, but will form a dynamic focus for the development of community organization.

QUESTION: How did COFO get started?

ANSWER: COFO has evolved through three phases in its short history. The first phase of the organization was little more than an ad hoc committee called together after the Freedom Rides of 1961 in an effort to have a meeting with Governor Ross Barnett. This committee of Mississippi civil rights leaders proved a convenient vehicle for channeling the voter registration program of the Voter Education Project, a part of the Southern Regional Council, into Mississippi.

With the funds of the Voter Education Project, COFO went into a second phase. In this period, beginning in February 1962, COFO became an umbrella for voter registration drives in the Mississippi Delta and other isolated cities in Mississippi. At this time COFO added a small full-time staff, mostly SNCC and a few CORE workers, and developed a voter registration program. The staff worked with local NAACP leaders and SCLC citizenship teachers in an effort to give the Mississippi Negroes the broadest possible support. COFO continued essentially as a committee with a staff and a program until the fall of 1963.

The emergence of the Ruleville Citizenship Group, and the Holmes County Voters League, testified to the possibility of starting strong local groups. It was felt that COFO could be the organization through which horizontal ties could develop among these groups, with the strongest common denominator possible within the general aims of the Civil Rights Movement. Every effort was made during this time to cut across county and organizational lines and have people from different areas meet with each other, to sponsor county, regional, and state-wide meetings, to bring students together from different parts of the state for workshops, to help and send groups outside of the state to meetings, conferences, workshops, and SCLC citizenship schools. During this second phase we began to feel more and more that the Committee could be based in a network of local adult groups sprung from the Movement as we worked the state.

The third phase representing the present functioning of the organization began in the fall of 1963 with the Freedom Vote for Governor. This marked the first state-wide effort and coincided with the establishment of a state-wide office in Jackson and a trunk line to reach into the Mississippi Delta and hill country. The staff has broadened to include more CORE and SNCC workers and more citizenship schools.

Plans for the fourth phase of the organization would include a budget or funds for program and staff on a long term basis, worked out with the major civil rights organizations and individuals across the country. The aim would be to organize every Negro community in Mississippi to train local people to help lead Mississippi through the next difficult years of transition.

## II. Mrs. Hamer's Campaign For Congress

(2nd Congressional District)

QUESTION: Who is Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer?

ANSWER: Mrs. Hamer is one of the four candidates running for political office this summer in Mississippi. She is challenging Mr. Jamie Whitten for the seat of U.S. Representative in the Second Congressional District. Mr. Whitten is a powerful man in the House of Representatives, holding the position of Chairman of the House Appropriations Sub-Committee on Agriculture. Since the Second Congressional District is the heart of the cotton-growing Delta, where Negroes outnumber whites in most of the counties, what Mr. Whitten does as chairman of this committee has direct bearing on both Negro and white populations. So far, Mr. Whitten's actions have reflected a decidedly racist bias—so that he is not representing *all* the people of the Second Congressional District, but those white landholders who control the majority of the wealth in the Delta.

One of the most blatant example of this bias on Mr. Whitten's part was a bill before the Sub-Committee on Agriculture to train 2400 hundred men to drive tractors. The bill was killed. Why kill a bill which obviously would benefit the state by attacking the problems of automation? The answer becomes clear when we realize that (1) under the Manpower Retraining Act, all projects must be integrated. (2) The majority of those to be trained were Negro (600 whites.)

QUESTION: Why is Mrs. Hamer running for office?

ANSWER: Mrs. Hamer is the mother of several children and besides that, a woman, which is very unusual for Mississippi politics. It is certainly partially because she is a mother and concerned about the future of her children that she is running. However the real answer to this question can only be found in Mrs. Hammer's history and the experiences she has had as a native Mississippian. Mrs. Hammer, who is forty-seven, comes from Ruleville, Mississippi, in Sunflower County. This is cotton growing country—large plantations (of sometimes hundreds and thousands of acres of land), small towns, the Company Store, the sheriff whose job it is to "control the niggers" and not see the bootleg whiskey being sold—the home of Senator James O. Eastland.

Until 1962, the Hamers had lived for sixteen years on a plantation four miles from Ruleville. On August 31, 1962, Mrs. Hamer tried to register to vote—the same day she and her husband were told they would have to leave the plantation immediately by the owner. His comment to Mrs. Hamer was, "What are you trying to do to me." A Negro does not act independently of his "Owner." This revealing comment illustrates how inextricably the Negroes' destiny has been linked to the land and its owner. A system from which all the legal restrictions of slavery have been removed but which has remained frozen in place. It is only now changing because of the forces of change all around it. Mrs. Hamer's action represents the new attitude of emancipation on the part of the Negro, an attitude which has come slowly to the feudal-like system of the Delta, where the symbiotic relationship of white and black has perhaps been more intense than anywhere else. The slowness with which change has come to the Delta is in direct relationship to the amount of opposition expressed by the white people there. Mrs. Hamer began working with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in December, 1962, and has been one of the most active workers in the state on Voter Registration. Because of her activities she has received much abuse from white people in the Ruleville community—people shoot into her home, threaten her

life. In 1963, she was arrested in Winona, Mississippi, held in jail overnight for no reason and severely beaten with a blackjack. She still suffers from this incident.

Mrs. Hamer feels very strongly that Negroes are not being represented in either state or national government and this forms the basis for her willingness to run for office even in the face of tremendous dangers to herself personally. Mrs. Hamer tells her audiences that she is only saying "what you have been thinking all along." But Mrs. Hamer plans to direct her campaign to whites as well as Negroes. It is her feeling that all Mississippians, white and Negro alike, are victims of the all-white, one-party power structure of the state. The major emphasis of Mrs. Hamer's campaign however, will be voting rights for the Negro. Her platform, like that of the other three candidates, includes a discussion of issues that reach beyond the problems within the state of poverty, automation, education, and equal representation and touches on national domestic issues as well as international policy.

It is a comment on the conservative reaction that the state has shown in the past ten years, that Representative Frank Smith was defeated in the 1962 elections. Although not outspokenly liberal about voting rights for the Negro, Smith was concerned for all the people of the Delta and has some idea of the problems the region faces in the future as automation takes away the jobs of many people. Recently he made a statement in support of the Civil Rights bill now before the Congress. The two or three rational men of some vision in the Mississippi Legislature have all been voted out of office in the last four years. It is necessary that Mrs. Hamer and people like her come forward to fill this gap.

QUESTION: How will Mrs. Hamer conduct her campaign?

ANSWER: Mrs. Hamer is entered in the regular Democratic primary in Mississippi to be held June 2, 1964. She is running on what is to be called the FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC PARTY. If defeated in the Democratic party, she will be able to continue her campaign as an Independent in the General Election.

QUESTION: Has she any chance of winning? If not, why challenge?

ANSWER: The chances of Mrs. Hamer actually becoming the Representative to the House at this time are of course almost impossible. But since the campaign, as well as the campaigns of the other three candidates, has a two-fold purpose—the chances of winning the goals they seek are very good. One of the purposes is to encourage Negroes not now registered to vote to register by means of the "Freedom Registration" to be conducted this summer. The second purpose is to let the State of Mississippi and the nation become aware that change is taking place in Mississippi and that the rights of the Negro must be realized, if Democracy is to work in a state like Mississippi.

### III. Other Aspects of the COFO Political Program for the Summer

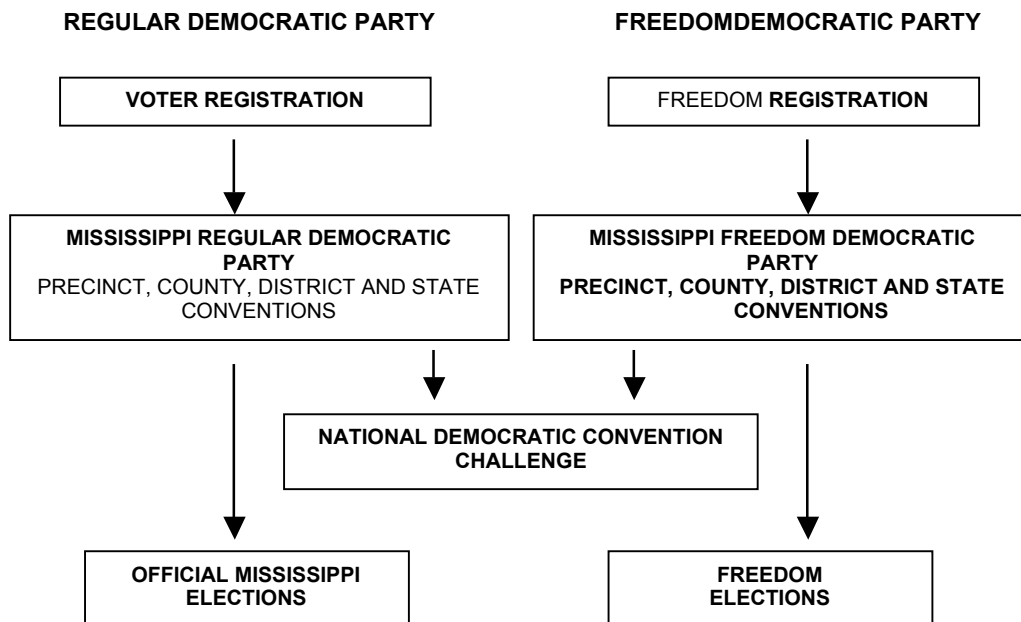
QUESTION: How will the Democratic Convention be challenged?

ANSWER: The focus of political activity during the spring and summer will be an attempt to unseat the regular Mississippi Delegation to the National Democratic Convention at Atlantic City, New Jersey, in August of this year.

Mississippi does not allow many people, particularly Negroes, to participate in political affairs in meaningful numbers. For this reason COFO claims that the Mississippi delegation to the Convention does not represent all the people of Mississippi and should not be seated. An attempt



is being made to contact delegations from other states to have them vote against seating the regular Mississippi delegation. It is not known whether this challenge will be successful. Two groups of delegates will attempt to be seated at the convention—the regular Democratic delegation and the so-called Freedom Democratic Delegation. This means that COFO is organizing (1) those people who are now registered voters in Mississippi and (2) those who have tried to register and have not been allowed to vote. From each of these groups a delegation will be chosen to go to the National Convention.



Note: Any registered voter can take part in both columns

**Regular Democratic Party**—The Democratic Party in Mississippi every four years holds a series of conventions to select delegates to the National Democratic National Convention. The conventions are held in years of a national election; 1964 is such a year.

COFO's plan is for as many Negro registered voters to attempt to attend precinct meetings as possible and, if allowed to participate, to use their influence to get Negro representatives elected to attend the County Conventions. In other words, the attempt will be to have Negroes participating in the regularly prescribed manner in every stage of the political process from precinct meeting, to County convention, district convention and state convention. The possibilities of Negroes actually being allowed to participate is slim but it is important that the effort be made to go through the normal channels as an educational process for Negroes who have never had the opportunity of doing it before and also as an indication of serious intent to the white political structure.

**Freedom Democratic Party**—Because the state officials have refused to register so many people in Mississippi, COFO is running a parallel registration procedure called Freedom Registration. Freedom Registration will take place under a Freedom Registrar—one in each of the counties in the state. The Freedom Registration is a simplified registration form with no literacy or interpretative requirements. Any U.S. citizen who is a resident of Mississippi can be Freedom registered. The anticipated goal for Freedom Registration is 300,000 to 400,000 people.

It is these two delegations—from the regular Democratic Party and from the Freedom Democratic Party—which will attempt to be seated as the delegates to the National Democratic Convention. The challenge of the Freedom Democratic Party at the National Convention is one attempt to win truly representative government for all the people in Mississippi.

In addition to the campaign being conducted by Mrs. Hamer in the Second congressional district, there are three other Freedom Candidates. They are Mr. James M. Houston of Vicksburg, Representative of the Third Congressional District; Reverend Jone E. Cameron of Hattiesburg, Fifth Congressional District and Mrs. Victoria Jo Gray of Hattiesburg, Senate against Senator John Stennis.

The Freedom Candidates are running on generally the same platform. The platform was drawn up by the COFO Convention. Each of the candidates, of course, will vary in terms of the issues they discuss in the campaign. The platform drawn up by COFO touches on issues of foreign aid and domestic policy as well as local problems. On the issues of disarmament, the United Nations, foreign aid, the platform emphasizes our working directly for a peaceful world by urging further steps toward curtailing bomb testing. It recognizes that only through responsible involvement in the U.N. and foreign aid programs can the U.S. contribute to a peaceful world. It strongly urges passage of the Civil Rights bill *now*. On domestic issues at the National level it urges and supports the anti-poverty program of President Johnson, recognizing that poverty is one of America's most pressing problems. In addition, it supports medicare, federal supported education programs, particularly job retraining programs; further development of the nation's poverty-stricken rural areas; urban renewal programs in Mississippi, which have been curtailed by the Mississippi House of Representatives during this session of the Legislature.

In the November elections this fall all Freedom registered voters and regularly registered voters will be eligible to vote in the Freedom election. This election will have a ballot which will include Freedom candidates as well as the regular candidates. The election will again show that people wishing to take part in Mississippi political affairs are prevented from doing so by existing restrictions.

The COFO political program is designed to fill two roles:

1. Challenge the existing political structure in Mississippi and show how it discriminates against the Negro.
2. Educate the Negro politically; get the Negro thinking about specific ways of acting to improve Mississippi and his position in the state and to train people for future positions of leadership in the state.

#### IV. Voting in Mississippi

QUESTION: How is the Democratic Party organized in the State?

ANSWER: The precinct is the smallest political unit. It is usually a part of a supervisor's district (called a "beat"). Each county has five beats. Since there are usually two or three precincts to a supervisor's district, there are at least ten to fifteen precincts in a county. Some counties have many more precincts, other counties have fewer precincts. There are about 1800 precincts in the state.

The precinct convention is the only convention open to all voters in an area. These conventions are usually poorly attended. This is an indication of the apathy on the part of voters in the state—apathy which allows a frightening amount of power to be in the hands of a very few men who make most of the decisions. Negroes, since Reconstruction, have not been a part of this process at all, even those who are registered to vote. At the precinct convention delegates to the

county convention are chosen. The number of delegates is decided earlier by the County Democratic Executive Committee; usually from one to six delegates are chosen. Usually there are alternate delegates, thus doubling the size of the delegation. The precinct convention is run by majority vote and by rules decided by majority vote.

COFO challenged the precinct meetings in about fifteen or twenty precincts by having both registered and unregistered Negroes attempt to attend the meetings. This is to form the basis for the national challenge and therefore is most important. After the challenge, the duplicate Freedom Democratic precinct meetings were held to parallel the Democratic meetings.

The county convention meets at least one week after the precinct conventions and is attended by elected delegates from the precincts of the eighty-two counties of the state. The county convention selects delegates to the district and state conventions. Each county elects delegates equal to twice the number of representatives that county has in the Mississippi House of Representatives. Many times, each vote is split in half, so twice as many delegates are elected, and an alternate is then elected for each half-vote delegate. The county convention also elects the County Democratic Executive Committee, which has fifteen members. This committee appoints poll watchers, counts votes, and is the county political body.

The district conventions are held at least a week after the county conventions. There are five district conventions—one for each Congressional district. At the district convention six delegates, each with half a vote, are chosen to go to the National Democratic Convention. Three alternate delegates are also chosen. The National Democratic Convention is where the selection of the Democratic candidate for President is made. Three members of the State Democratic Executive Committee are chosen at the convention. One candidate for Democratic Presidential elector is chosen.

At the state convention, held at least a week after the last of the district conventions, the rest of the delegates to the National Convention are chosen. Mississippi has twenty-four votes at the National Democratic Convention. The state convention also elects the National Democratic Committeeman and the National Democratic Committeewoman. These two people sit on the Democratic national Committee; this is the committee in charge of policy for the state between conventions. The State Democratic Executive Committee is the policy body for the Democratic Party throughout the state.

Since traditionally there has not been a strong Republican Party in the state, the Primary for all practical purposes indicates the results of the election. Until the 1963 Gubernatorial election, when a Republican for the first time really offered opposition, people tended to vote in the Primary and not in the general election. This monolithic structure has offered very little atmosphere for real debate. There is some hope that the favorable showing of the Republicans (even though Goldwater conservative in nature) will offer at least an interchange of ideas for the future.

QUESTION: Who votes in Mississippi?

ANSWER: There are no statistics available on whites registered to vote. Even the information available on Negro voting is incomplete since it comes from only sixty-nine of the eighty-two counties in the state. In these counties Negroes constitute 37.7 percent of the adult population but only 6.2 percent are registered to vote. In thirteen of the sixty-nine counties there are no registered Negro voters.

It is no accident that information on voting is hard to obtain or that only 25,000 Negroes are registered. As anywhere else, part of the problem is apathy. But in Mississippi even apathy is

different. It is born not so much of disinterest as a feeling of utter frustration and futility passed from generation to generation.

For instance in Holmes County where Negroes are three fourths of the population, there are no Negro voters. Two or three have been trying to register every day since July, 1963. The registrar has said flatly that he will allow Negroes to take the test but he has no intention of passing them. It is this kind of frustration which the Negro is faced with for even attempting to exercise the most basic of democratic rights in Mississippi.

QUESTION: What are the proofs of discrimination in voting?

ANSWER: The whole pattern of voting requirements and of the registration form is calculated to make the process appear to the voter to be hopeless. The process is a complicated one which culminates in the would-be voter's name being published in the paper. Why publish a prospective voter's name in the paper—like announcing his marriage or the birth of a child? The major purpose is to overwhelm the voter so that he is afraid to even attempt to register. Behind this approach is supposed to be—and all too often is—a collection of fears that someone will challenge a voter's moral character, that he may be prosecuted for perjury. This not an altogether unfounded fear as illustrated by the fact that one man who attempted to register was accused of being morally unfit to be a voter because he and his wife were not legally married but had been living in a common-law relationship for over twenty years. In addition, publishing a prospective voter's name announces his intention to his employer, landlord and anyone else who might retaliate with violence.

It is difficult to prove, on the face of it, that the voting laws in Mississippi are purposefully discriminatory, since they apply equally to white and black. However it is by comparison with other states—particularly those outside the deep South—that the whole procedure becomes suspect. It is much less difficult to see how discrimination works at the level of the individual Negro who attempts to register. There are many evidences of brutality, economic and physical retaliation. An illustration of physical retaliation is the case of the three Negro men who went to Rankin County Courthouse to register. As one man was filling in the form, the County Sheriff came in and began questioning him. When the man told him he was registering to vote, the sheriff began beating him on the head with a blackjack and forced him out of the office. This was the result of individuals deciding on their own to register—not a planned registration campaign which had aroused feelings against Negroes.

We do have clear evidence, however, that the *intent* of the voting laws passed by the legislature in 1955 and 1962 was discrimination against Negro voters. Public officials at the time carefully avoided making statements which could be used in court actions as proof of intention to discriminate. However, Governor White stated in 1954 that the constitutional amendments proposed (and passed in 1955) would “tend to maintain segregation.” In 1962 a representative urged the legislators not to take up unnecessary questions regarding the legislation in public. So there was no real debate on the floor of the house. In recent times this policy has been strictly adhered to on any legislation affecting race in the state legislature. The comments of a legislator, who was very conscious of the power of the Citizens Council, give us an indication of how restricted the lawmakers are to differ:

It's hard for us sometimes to consider a bill on its merits if there is any way Bill Simmons (executive secretary of the Citizens Council) can attach an integration tag. For instance, a resolution was introduced in the House to urge a boycott of Memphis stores because some of

them have desegregated. I knew it was ridiculous and would merely amuse North Mississippians who habitually shop in Memphis. The resolution came in the same week that four Negroes were fined in court for boycotting Clarksdale stores. Yet the hot eyes of Bill Simmons were watching. If we vote against the resolution he would have branded us. So there we were, approving a boycott while a Mississippi court was convicting Negroes for doing what we lawmakers were advocating. It just didn't make sense.

In October, 1954, the Jackson *Daily News* editorialized on statements made by Robert Patterson, Head of the Citizens Council, about the legislation. The headline read, "The amendment is intended solely to limit Negro registration." The *Jackson Times* (a now defunct newspaper) reported, "This proposed amendment is not aimed at keeping white people from voting, no matter how morally corrupt they may be. It is an ill-disguised attempt to keep qualified Negroes from voting; and as such, it should not have the support of the people of Mississippi." This advice was not heeded, however, and the legislation was passed.

The registration form itself is not too difficult in terms of its demands on the person's literacy. There are, however, numerous factual questions which the registrant must answer, such as his precinct. The attempt to make the application appear difficult begins with its title "SWORN Written Application for Registration." There are included a series of potentially confusing questions, which ask about the registrant's occupation, business and employment. The numerous small questions which make up this part of the form are obviously not all necessary and could be answered by fewer questions. Then why have them? Because they provide more opportunity for error on the part of the person registering.

The voter test is an exam in which the registrant must be able to write and interpret a section of the Mississippi Constitution. A Yale law graduate states that "there are some 285 sections of the state constitution, and the document is one of the most complex and confusing in the nation." The examiner points to a section and tells the applicant to copy and interpret it. On the tester's cognizance, you pass or fail. He has absolute power. His decision is not reviewable, and there are no standards by which it can be judged in court.

The above information gives us the background of discrimination in voting in the state and some specifics of how the Registrar misuses the registration form to keep Negroes from voting. There are, however other proofs of discrimination—incident after incident of people who have been turned away from the Circuit Clerk's office without being allowed to register; people who have been shot at, lost their jobs or otherwise have been intimidated for attempting to vote. It has always been made clear to the Negro by his white employer, landlord, or acquaintance that he is not to attempt to vote—this is the most present kind of proof of discrimination.

QUESTION: Why isn't the Negro allowed to vote? What does the white man fear?

ANSWER: In Mississippi, where the Negro represents 42 percent of the population, perhaps the numerical reason is the most overpowering answer as to why the Negro is not allowed to vote and why the white man is so afraid. The intensity of white reaction is in direct proportion to the numbers of Negroes in a given county or area. For instance, in the gulf counties and the extreme northern hill counties where there is not as large a percentage of Negroes, opposition by whites to voting is less violent. While in the Delta counties, southern counties and the river counties, with a few exceptions, opposition is sudden, violent and explosive when Negroes attempt to register to vote in large numbers or individually. It is often the individual Negro who deviates from "his place" which frightens the white man the most. What was known and safe suddenly becomes

unknown and uncontrollable. Retaliation to individuals is often death, as in the case of Herbert Lee in Amite County. Mr. Lee tried to register and encouraged others to register—for this he was shot down by a state legislator. When Negroes register in large numbers because of a voter drive, the white man can blame “outsiders” and “agitators” for stirring up things.

In essence, then, the reasons Negroes are not allowed to vote and the things the white man fears are inextricably part of the same cloth. The white man fears a “Negro take-over”—block voting. Negroes controlling the state—these are the surface things. Underneath this are the sometimes conscious and sometimes unconscious fears about himself—the guilt for an enslaving system which makes a man less than human because of the color of his skin. All of this gets translated into myths about the Negroes’ inferiority, dirtiness, ignorance, violence. These myths in turn justify the system. For those people who can see beyond the myths, who either for moral or economic reasons would like to see the segregated pattern of southern life change, there is the White Citizens Council. The Council has a great deal of control of the political structure but even more than that is a “big brother” looking over the shoulder of anyone who wants to step out of line.

Perhaps some quotations from Council literature can say it better. “If the Negro was permitted to obtain the ballot . . . it would mean that no qualified white man . . . could ever hold public office (and) seats now held by competent white representatives would be held by ignorant, incompetent Negroes.” “There is a vast gulf between the IQ of the Negro . . . and the average white man because of an inherent deficiency in mental ability, psychological and temperamental inadequacies, of indifference and natural indolence on the part of Negro.”; “If segregation breaks down, the social structure breaks down. . . . The Communists hope to achieve disintegration through integration America”; “Integration represents darkness, regimentation, totalitarianism, communism and destruction. . . . Segregation represents the freedom to choose one’s associates, Americanism, state sovereignty and the survival of the white race”; “The enemy cloaked in the mysterious name of ‘integration’ is hysterically assaulting the natural order, the created order in nature, the legal order under God, and above all else, the free grace of Jesus Christ.”

QUESTION: What steps have been taken to give the Negroes the vote?

ANSWER: The first concerted effort to get Negroes registered in Mississippi began in 1961 when Bob Moses, moving into Greenwood, Mississippi, started a program to educate and encourage local people to participate in political activity. This project was sponsored by the Voter Education Project of the Southern Regional Council. As has already been discussed, the beginning of COFO came from this effort. The focus of COFO has been largely on political action. Because obtaining the individual’s right to vote is the key to full participation in the democratic process through which hopefully a deeper kind of change can come. Until 1963 much time was spent simply in becoming known in local communities and establishing the basis of a political organization which could act with united effort. The past year has seen several new attempts at education and mass registration.

The Mock Campaign for Governor was one such attempt. By focusing on the Campaign with Freedom Candidates, COFO was able to garner 80-90,000 votes and in the process educate this many people to the process of voting and the importance of political participation.

Freedom Days have also been planned in several communities this past spring. Most notable are the ones in Hattiesburg and Canton, Mississippi. These are voter drives sponsored by COFO to get as many people in the community as possible registered to vote. In both places a day or several days were set to get as many people as possible to go down to register. It was necessary to

picket the courthouse in both Canton and Hattiesburg because of the obvious policy of discrimination on the part of the Registrar. In Canton only two or three people a day have been allowed to take the test at all. Picketing has been allowed by the local officials, which in itself is an innovation in Mississippi, where people have never been allowed to picket over five minutes without being arrested. The National Council of Churches has cooperated in this project by sending teams of northern ministers to each city to act as observers and to be in a negotiating role with city officials and sympathetic whites. This has tended to keep down the violence but has not stopped arrests altogether.

QUESTION: How successful have the Freedom Days been?

ANSWER: They have not been successful in terms of numbers. For instance in Hattiesburg of about 500 attempts to register, about 150 people have actually been registered (and here the registrar is under federal court order not to discriminate). Other federal suits are being filed against Registrars to try to get them disqualified. This kind of counter-action may in time prove so harassing to local registrars that they will improve, but is a lengthy and expensive process. Since 1961, out of about 70,000 people who have been reached by civil rights groups, only 6,000 to 7,000 have actually attempted to register and only 10 percent of that number have actually gotten registered. This is very little success for a lot of time and effort spent. But to understand the goals COFO is trying to reach, we must look at things other than numbers. The amount of education and political awareness among Negroes has been incalculable. The feeling that at last there is something they as individuals can do to better themselves and their lot in Mississippi has been created. Once this spirit has been aroused, change *has already begun to take place*. In a real sense, the Freedom School is attempting to spread this spirit to students, who can gain from this a new sense of their own identity and importance as people. The second thing that has been accomplished is that the white Mississippian can no longer believe the myth that the Negro is “happy”; he is too aware there is change in the air. This means that one segment of the white population is becoming resigned to change; another is beginning to feel it can do what it has wanted to do all along—help bring about change; and the other feels backed into a corner and is becoming vicious. The third aspect of the effects of political activity is that the rest of the nation has before it constantly the stark reality of the disenfranchised Negro in Mississippi. It makes it a little more difficult for James O. Eastland in Washington to talk about “gradual change” and States Rights as an excuse for segregation, when Negroes are being denied their basic right of the vote in Mississippi.

#### V. Historical Development of White, One-Party Politics

QUESTION: What role did Reconstruction play?

The striking parallel between people and events of the 1850's and the 1950's reminds us that Mississippi has been on the defensive against inevitable social change for more than a century and that for some years before the Civil War it had developed a closed society with an orthodoxy accepted by nearly everyone in the state. The all pervading doctrine then and now has been white supremacy.

Dr. James Silver  
*Mississippi-The Closed Society*

ANSWER: Dr. Silver, History Professor at the University of Mississippi, points out a truth that far too few people are aware of or want to recognize. And that is that the south has always, for all practical purposes gone its own way, politically and otherwise. People from outside the Southern states have always been prone to view the “Old South” as a more backward section of the United States—but very definitely a part of the same heritage. It would be a mistake to say that slavery had its influence on the politics of Mississippi but so did the influx of immigrants to New England. This is to reduce the problem to the too-simple answer of sectional politics.

The white Southerner if asked to explain his “way of life” to the outside often harks back to Reconstruction to answer for the South’s sectionalism, one-party politics, and segregation. It is as much a mistake to take this answer at face value as it is to see the white southerner only as a bigot and a racist. There is no doubt that Reconstruction was a difficult time for both the white southerner whose rights, temporarily, had been suspended and for the newly freed slave, who had to adjust himself to freedom. The aftermath of war is the price that must be paid for waging war. C. Van Woodward in *Reunion and Reaction* points out that the South had by 1877 regained control of its own destiny and proceeded between then and 1890 to reestablish segregation by means of enacting segregation laws and making the new battle cry “states rights.” An important element of this control was keeping the Negro from voting.

He further states that democracy in America had always operated through compromise. The period of the Civil War and Reconstruction represent the only time when principle became the prime motivation for political action. For the ten years following the end of the war the South remained true to its principles and so did the North. However, with the secret compromise of 1877 between southern politicians and northern Republicans, the pattern of compromise and political expediency was re-established. This compromise represents the beginning of the coalition between the South and those northern Republicans who espouse the causes of states rights and business interests. It is this coalition which, in part, make the South the powerful force it is in the legislature.

The compromise of 1877 over the election of Hayes and Tilden essentially was that the South would allow Hayes to win the election in exchange for the three remaining states then under federal occupation being returned to local control. Prior to the Civil War the South had been as divided in political loyalty as other sections of the country. It was after the war that the Southern Whigs, unable to tolerate the Northern wing of party because of their concern with equal rights for Negroes, resignedly settled into the Democratic Party. Many of these so-called conservative Democrats still basically held the same views that led them to vote for Henry Clay’s nationalistic and capitalistic protective tariff and national bank.

After this party shift, Woodward says, “a thick miasma settled down over the political scene in the South. Under the fog of the one-party system, one white man was virtually indistinguishable from another in his politics.”

QUESTION: Who controls the vote?

ANSWER: Most obviously, white people control the vote, leaving the Negro without representation, except as they see fit to represent him. However, traditionally the one-party system has continued based on a lack of dialogue. This control has had to be tight and monolithic. Ralph McGill talks about the “small town rich man” as the source of political as well as economic power in the small towns of the rural South. This is not just the plantation owner of the cotton growing area, but the man in each small town who owns the gin and the main store, the cotton warehouse, the lumber mill. He lives in the largest house in the town, has his finger in everything



that goes on in the town and rules with an iron hand. He makes a contribution at campaign time and always to the right man, and if in doubt, to both candidates. He has a hand in political patronage in his county.

Since the time of the depression in the 1930's this pattern has been gradually changing. It has remained longest perhaps in Mississippi, where change has come slowest and most painfully. This kind of small town demagogue can still be found in Mississippi but his influence in being displaced by industrial interests and as the state's economy becomes more diversified.

QUESTION: Why hasn't the Republican Party been stronger?

ANSWER: It has been to the advantage of the deep South to remain monolithic. It has been able to have more influence this way, at a national level. On the whole, few people have participated in politics and most have been willing to let a few people make the decisions for them. However, in the recent Gubernatorial campaign, for the first time, the Republican Party made a strong showing. Not nearly enough to win the election, only 34 percent of the vote. But this represents a crack in the wall of the one-party system. The legislation before the Mississippi legislature indicates how threatening this showing was to the political power structure in the state. The legislation, if passed, would virtually outlaw the Republican Party in the state. In an analysis of the election returns, Dr. Gordon Henderson of Millsaps College, stated that the majority of the Republican voters seemed to be urban, young, educated, and of the middle class. Their political views seemed to be conservative. And indeed the Republican candidate offered little hope to the Negroes of Mississippi. What it does offer is a chance for dialogue. However, there is hope for the future, if a two party system does develop, the Negro's vote will certainly be in demand.

QUESTION: What changes will occur in the state when Negroes can vote?

ANSWER: Most important, it will give the Negro a chance to voice his opinion in how his children should be educated, how his town is to be run, in short to decide for himself those things which in the past have either been neglected or done for him. In terms of what changes will occur on the state scene. When Negroes have the opportunity to use their vote, it is likely to have a liberalizing influence. Many kinds of social legislation, which have previously been defeated or kept out of the state, such as federal job retraining programs, urban renewal projects, stronger welfare policy, etc. will have a chance of being passed. It means an opportunity for Negroes to hold public office and to begin to work at other than menial tasks.

Certainly, obtaining the vote alone is not going to create the "good society" in Mississippi. There has to also be a beginning of understanding and acceptance of each other, if the Negro is to obtain his human as well as his civil rights. In the long run one is useless without the other. But obtaining the vote has the potential for unlocking a number of doors that have been closed to the Negro in Mississippi and is absolutely essential if a democratic form of government is to work in the state.

## LESSON PLANS FOR THE UNIT ON MISSISSIPPI POLITICS

## INTRODUCTION

The lesson plans are organized to be a combination of lecture and discussion, with a great deal of freedom given students to discuss his own ideas and pursue topics of interest to the class. For instance the sections dealing with party organization and historical aspects of the one-party system might be presented in lecture form with discussion afterward. Then hopefully, this factual material will be brought into the discussion in other places. Each of the lectures will be organized around one or more concepts that the student should be presented with through the material. Case studies, visual materials and in some cases field trips may be used to illustrate points discussed.

This is to be a general outline only. It is hoped that the teacher will be flexible enough to adapt the material to his own background and experience. There are excerpts from some of the bibliographical material used in reparation of the background which have been duplicated for the use of the teacher. It may be useful in providing illustrations for some of the points of discussion.

The lesson plan material is not divided into specific periods, i.e., it is topically arranged with questions and illustrative material suggested at appropriate places. The teacher may use the plans in any way which seems best to suit the students interests. The arrangement does follow a natural train of development.

## MATERIALS TO BE USED AS TEACHING AIDS

Campaign literature on Mrs. Hamer (to be passed out to all students)

Voter Registration forms—regular forms (to be passed out to all students)

Freedom Registration forms (to be passed out to all students)

Sample Sections of the Mississippi Constitution (to be passed out to all students)

Pamphlet, “Why Vote—the ABC’s of Citizenship” (to be passed out to all students)

Film—“We’ll Never Turn Back”, on Greenwood Voter Project

Tapes of Mrs. Hamer conducting campaign and singing—obtainable from COFO office, 1017 Lynch St., Jackson, Miss.

Two sections of “Behind the Cotton Curtain” by Charles Remsberg on the Republican Party, and retaliation to the white community.

Report on the Greenwood Voter Project, printed in a larger report by The Southern Regional Council.

SNCC research staff, “Voter Registration Laws in Miss.”

TOPIC:	Mrs. Hamer’s Campaign and the organization of Mississippi Political System.
CONCEPTS:	(1) Importance of individual participation in politics and (2) Fundamentals of political organization at local, state and national level.
PRESENTATION:	Mrs. Hamer’s story and the facts about her campaign
DISCUSSION:	Discussion should center around why Mrs. Hamer is running. If the students have heard her speak they might discuss what her platform is and what they think of it. How does she differ from her opponent? Why is her campaign unusual?
Use Campaign lit. on Mrs. Hamer.	

**PRESENTATION:** Process of how someone runs for office—how will Mrs. Hamer be different? Present Democratic Party Organization in state.

**DISCUSSION:**

Play tapes of Mrs. Hamer's speeches and singing

**PRESENTATION:** Other ways that an individual can take part in politics other than voting or running for office. Present other political programs of COFO such as Freedom Registration Freedom Vote—ways of working for these programs for the students.

Pass out S.C.L.C. Pamphlet "Why Vote"

**DISCUSSION:**

**REVIEW:**

**TOPIC:** COFO Programs and discrimination in voting.

**CONCEPTS:** (1) How discrimination works and  
(2) what is being done about it.

**PRESENTATION:** Voter Registration Campaigns—Freedom Days in Hattiesburg and Canton. Could use here the material on the Greenwood Project as a case study.

**DISCUSSION:** Discussion should center around why Mrs. Hamer is running? If the students have heard her speak they might discuss what her platform is and what they think of it.

Film: "We'll Never Turn Back"

**PRESENTATION:** Voter requirements in Mississippi—how this works to discriminate against the Negro. Specifics of how the registration form is filled out. Use here the regular and Freedom reg. forms to illustrate differences.

**DISCUSSION:**

Regular and Freedom Registration Forms

**PRESENTATION:** All aspects of COFO's Political Program, as a means of obtaining the vote for Negroes in Miss.

**DISCUSSION:**

If students have not already had experience canvassing, a field trip might be arranged in which the students and teacher would canvass for an afternoon or evening in order to use the knowledge they had gained about the registration process and also to give them a sense of participation.

If a trip is not feasible, the teacher should encourage students to participate in this way.

**TOPIC:** Historical Aspects of Discrimination and the Future.

**CONCEPTS:** (1) why discrimination exists  
(2) What political freedom can mean.

**PRESENTATION:** One party system, how it developed and why.

**DISCUSSION:**

**PRESENTATION:** The effects of the one-party system. Citizens Council—untrue myths about Negroes—psychological effects on Negro and white. You could

use here the excerpts from “Behind the Cotton Curtain” on Republican Party and retaliation to whites.

DISCUSSION:

PRESENTATION:

How the vote can change the lives of people in Miss., what it cannot do that has to be done in other ways.

DISCUSSION:

REVIEW:

## CASE STUDIES



*“Reverend Jim Nance participates in voter registration canvassing”*

## ***STATISTICS ON EDUCATION, HOUSING, INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT, AND HEALTH***

### Part I: Education

The relationship between jobs and education is quite clear. The threat of automation on the uneducated and unskilled is clear. In an age of specialization and skill, nobody wants an illiterate. Nobody wants to take the time and money needed to help these people—nobody in the deep south where the problem is greatest. The South does not want to lose “its” cheap labor nor run the risk of really educating Negro laborers. While there are federal programs of training and assistance, these are under state and local control to a great extent—and therefore, are not at all beneficial to Negroes.

The South has the highest illiteracy rate in America. To maintain separate schools is costly; consequently neither school is very good and, of course, the Negro schools are inferior to the bad “white” schools. Adult education does not reach the Negro and neither does realistic vocational education. The states manage to keep most federal money in white institutions. It will be necessary to set up new institutions to handle the training for Negro adults and school dropouts—we are trying to do this now. Otherwise, these people will never be free—no matter what civil rights are put on the books.

In most southern states, approximately half of the students drop out of high school. Forty-three percent of Mississippi high school students left before graduating in 1962. They entered the

labor market, most of them, and one out of four could not find a job. Of the present population in Mississippi—8,444 whites have never been to school—and 32,196 Negroes. There are 40,274 functionally illiterate whites and 119,741 functionally illiterate Negroes in the state right now.

It is little wonder that 90% of Mississippi's sharecropper force is Negro.

Table 1. School Completion in the South, By States, 1962, NEA Report, January 1963

State	Percent to graduate	State	Percent to graduate
Florida	63	North Carolina	57
Texas	61	Tennessee	55
Arkansas	58	Alabama	55
Louisiana	58	South Carolina	54
Mississippi	58	Kentucky	52
Georgia	52	Virginia	52

Table 2. Years of School Completed by Persons 25 or Older, 1960 U. S. Bureau of the Census

	Years Completed						
	none	1-4	5-6	7	8	9-11	12
NON-WHITE (383,017)							
percentage	8.4	31.3	20.2	9.1	12.4	11.1	4.2
WHITE (681,959)							
percentage	1.2	5.9	7.6	5.6	14.4	23	24.6

Median grade: Nonwhite = grade 6; White = grade 11

Table 3. Illiteracy and Functional Illiteracy in the South, 1960  
U.S. Census 1960 and New York Times (April 8, 1962)

State	ILLITERACY percent of population	FUNCTIONALILLITERACY percent of population
Florida	2.6	10.8
Kentucky	3.3	16.2
Virginia	3.4	15.3
Tennessee	3.5	17.3
Arkansas	3.6	18.0
North Carolina	4.0	19.3
Texas	4.1	15.7
Alabama	4.2	19.1
Georgia	4.5	20.6
Mississippi	4.9	22.0
South Carolina	5.5	23.8
Louisiana	6.3	24.9

Part II: Housing Conditions

Statistics revealing housing conditions for Mississippi Negroes are somewhat shocking. In 1960 there were 207,611 housing units for Mississippi Negroes. Of these, 38 percent were owner-occupied, and 62 percent were renter-occupied (significantly out of line with the national proportion of owner and renter occupied housing). Of the 207,611 houses, only one-third can be classed as being in sound condition; the others have been classified as either deteriorating or dilapidated. Of the homes in the rural areas, over 75 percent are without any piped water at all, and over 90 percent of these rural homes had no flush toilets, no bathtub and no shower.

Table 4 Negro housing in Mississippi, 1960, U.S Bureau of the Census

	Total	Urban	Rural
Total Housing Units	207,611	77,824	129,787
Owner occupied (#)	79,059	32,913	46,146
Owner occupied (%)	38.1	42.3	35.6
Renter occupied (#)	128,552	44,911	83,641
Renter occupied (%)	61.9	57.5	64.4
Condition			
Owner occupied			
Sound	36,656	17,677	18,979
Deteriorating	27,545	10,005	17,540
Dilapidated	14,858	5,231	9,627
Renter occupied			
Sound	33,169	15,294	17,874
Deteriorating	52,629	15,937	36,692
Dilapidated	42,755	13,680	29,075
Water Supply			
Hot and Cold water piped inside	40,870	33,181	7,689
Only cold water piped inside	39,101	30,376	8,725
Piped water outside	27,502	10,229	17,273
No piped water	100,138	4,038	96,100
Toilet Facilities			
Flush Toilet, exclusive use	62,160	52,481	9,679
Flush Toilet, shared use	7,570	6,965	605
None	137,881	18,378	119,505
Bathing Facilities			
Bathtub or shower, exclusive use	44,991	36,333	8,658
Bathtub or shower, shared use	2,207	1,807	400
None	160,413	39,684	120,729

### Part III: Income and Employment

Employment problems for the Negroes in the rural South are even more severe than for any group in the United States. Because of segregation . . . the southern Negro has not received adequate training and education. He is an unskilled laborer.

Two things have happened in American labor—there is a shift from the production of goods (farming, for example) to services, and there is a shift from the demand for unskilled, or blue-collar, workers to skilled. Agriculture continues a rapid decline. Within a period of six months, as many as a thousand Negro laborers have been laid off in the Delta. What has happened is very simple—the machine can do more than the man. One mechanical cotton picker can do the work of seventy men in a day’s time. The plane that sprays or dusts the crop replaces hundreds of workers. The tractor is preferred over the man and mule—of course. It takes one man to fly a crop-duster, one man to run the tractor, one man to operate the picker . . . and this means that thousands of Negroes are underemployed, and unemployed. It means that thousands more are going to be completely unemployable . . . unless something is done. Ninety percent of the Delta’s Negro laborers are unskilled and lacking in adequate education. The day is coming when nobody will want these people—not even for once-a-month days when the machine cannot go out, because soon they will get a machine that can go out—in any kind of weather.

Automation and technology—complicated problems. But the simple truth now is that either these people get help, or they will starve. No stopgap measure will suffice. Older Negroes never had a chance to learn; younger Negroes, because they have to stop school and go to work in the field, are not getting the chance either. In America last year, one out of every four young Negroes went without jobs for the whole year—this was in the North, too. So migration is not the solution. Next year a million and a half young people will enter the labor market without having finished high school, many without finishing eighth grade. **MOST OF THEM WILL BE NEGRO.**

The Federal government defines “poverty” as an annual income under \$4,000. Most Negro families in the rural South earn less than \$2,000 annually.

In 1959, thirty-seven percent of all Mississippi Negroes earned less than \$1000. Fifty-one percent of these were on Delta farms, and many of the others were in Delta town, such as Cleveland and Greenwood.

In 1960 Negroes had an average annual income of \$606, only 29% of the average income of 2,023 among whites. The difference seems particularly wide in view of the fact that a higher proportion of Negro families are in the labor force. The data show that a high proportion of Negro males under age 24 and women over age 24 are in the labor force than is the case among whites.

Table 5. Median Income for Persons, 1950 and 1960 U. S. Bureau of Census

	1950 (in dollars)			1960 (in dollars)		
	state	urban	rural	state	urban	rural
nonwhite	440	693	390	606	871	474
white	1236	1826	973	2023	2622	1605



Table 6. Rate of Unemployment, U. S. Bureau of Census

1950	White	2.7 percent
	Nonwhite	4.5 percent
1960	White	4.5 percent
	Nonwhite	7.1 percent

Table 7 Employment status of the civilian, noninstitutional population in Mississippi, by color and sex, 1960 (% distribution)

	White			Nonwhite		
Employment status and sex	Urban	Rural non farm	Rural farm	Urban	Rural non farm	Rural farm
Both sexes						
Total, 14 years and over	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
In labor force	57.6	49.3	48.9	58.1	45.7	45.1
Not in labor force	42.4	50.7	51.1	41.9	54.3	54.9
In labor force	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
employed	96.0	94.6	96.3	91.2	92.9	95.3
unemployed	4.0	5.4	3.7	8.8	7.1	4.7
Females						
Total, 14 years and over	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
In labor force	37.7	29.1	24.1	48.9	30.5	21.5
Not in labor force	62.3	70.9	75.9	51.1	69.5	78.5
In labor force	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
employed	95.3	95.0	95.0	92.0	91.7	90.2
unemployed	4.7	5.0	5.0	8.0	8.3	9.8
Males						
Total, 14 years and over	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
In labor force	79.3	70.0	72.7	70.0	63.0	69.2
Not in labor force	20.7	30.0	27.3	30.0	37.0	30.8
In labor force	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
employed	93.3	94.5	96.7	94.5	93.5	96.9
unemployed	3.7	5.5	3.3	5.5	6.5	3.1

#### Part IV: Health

Number and Proportion: 915,722 Negroes constituted, in 1960, roughly 42% of the total 2,178,000 population in Mississippi. Between 1940 and 1960, the total population remained nearly the same (percent change: -0.2), with a more than 7% decrease in the Negro population compared with an increase of more than 6% among the non-Negro population. (See Table 8.)

Although birth rates among Negroes have been consistently higher than those among whites, mortality rates are higher, average life expectancy is lower and migration out of the state is considerably higher among Negroes than among whites.

Birth Rates: The higher birth rates among Negroes, in comparison with whites, are shown in Table 9. In 1948, the rate per 1,000 among the Negro population was 34.8, compared with 21.8 among whites. Since 1945 there has been a significant rise in the birth rate for Negroes. During the depression 30's, sharp declines in birth rates occurred among both Negroes and whites. (Table 9.)

Death Rates: Death rates among Negroes continue to be higher than the rates for whites, although the difference in the rates has consistently narrowed. (Table 10.) It is still a fact, however, that the death rate among Negroes today is not as low as it was for whites in 1913, the first year for which we have death rate data. This is largely a reflection of the continued low standard of living Mississippi Negroes exist under, in addition to a lack of access to adequate hospital care.

Infant Mortality: Infant mortality rates since 1920 for both races have generally gone downward. The rate for nonwhites, however, swung upward in 1957 and continued upward until 1961 when it started downward again. It takes no statistical genius to understand what the figures reflect: In Mississippi, the chances for a Negro baby dying within the first year of life are at best twice those of a white baby. Though most babies of both races do survive, Negro babies have a greater chance of starting life with a health handicap. In communities where Negroes are subject to major segregation and discrimination, the Negro baby is much more likely to be born prematurely. Premature babies may get excellent care if they are born in or near a hospital with a modern center for premature infants, but Negroes in Mississippi are largely denied this. (Table 11.)

Table 8. Population of Mississippi, by color, 1900-1960  
U.S. Bureau of the Census

Year	Total	Nonwhite Number	Percentage
1960	2,178,141	920,595	44.4
1950	2,178,914	990,282	45.5
1940	2,183,796	1,077,469	49.1
1930	2,009,821	1,011,744	50.5
1920	1,790,618	936,656	52.5
1910	1,797,114	1,011,003	56.2
1900	1,551,270	910,070	58.6

Table 9. Estimated Birth Rates Mississippi State Board of Health  
Births per 1,000 population

<u>Year</u>	<u>Nonwhite</u>	<u>White</u>
1961	35	22
1959	37	21
1955	37	23
1950	38	23
1940	27	21
1935	25	21
1930	24	23
1925	23	24
1920	23	26

Table 10. Death Rates  
Deaths per 1,000 population

<u>Year</u>	<u>Nonwhite</u>	<u>White</u>
1961	11	9
1959	11	8
1955	10	9
1950	11	8
1940	13	9
1935	12	9
1930	15	9
1925	14	9
1920	15	9

Table 11. Deaths Under One Year,  
per 1,000 population

<u>Year</u>	<u>Nonwhite</u>	<u>White</u>
1961	50	23
1960	54	24
1955	46	25
1950	43	28
1945	45	36
1940	61	46
1935	85	51
1925	86	53
1920	101	60

## ***THE SOUTH AS AN UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRY***

By Robb K. Burlage

The last three decades in Dixie have moved the plantation economy clearly into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century industrial world. The South, though a stepchild, is a full-fledged member of the national economy. Fifty years later than the North its urban areas have tipped the balance over the rural, though in values, traditions, and politics the battle has not been completely won. Perhaps fifty years later than the North the crest of the industrial revolution has hit the South. The “New South” which Henry Grady heralded in the 1880’s appears to be at hand.

To miss the dynamic aspects of the rise in average per capita income, manufacturing, employment, urban population, regional bank assets, and agricultural productivity (and “agricultural revolution” has swept the South as well as a manufacturing one, emphasizing capital-intensive large units and fewer and fewer individual farmers producing more and more total product) would be a serious mistake.

On the other hand, to refer glowingly to the “New South” as a thing completed or merely a matter of more incremental growth is to avoid serious problems that make the South, as it was in the 30’s, the nation’s number one economic problem.

According to the usual criterion of per capita income, the South has made heartening progress in the last three decades—from 50% to about 75% of the national average. However, this is only “three fourths American” and this figure in itself can be misleading. The urban Negro, the rural resident—white and Negro, and the people of “depressed areas” such as the Southern Appalachian region are generally below this figure. Many urban whites, on the other hand, are close to the national average.

The Negro is still the automatic lower class of the South despite some strides in improvement of educational and employment opportunities. The estimated average per capita income of the Negro in the South is less than \$1000; for all other Southerners it is about \$1500. The “place” of the Negro today, though more mobile socially and geographically than before, is most uncertain in the Southern economy. The Negro was the “technology of Southern agriculture for almost three centuries. The slave Negro-machine gave the South the edge in production and wealth over the rest of the nation for almost two centuries. It was the catching-up which the North has made with the non-human machines that gave Northern industrialism its victory over the agrarian South, which despite its cotton gin was relatively capital-poor. Transferring the Negro from an economy where he was the machinery of production to one which uses him as a skilled operator of the machinery of production has been the hardest task of Southern development.

The Negro, given a new image of life by the military, national communication media, and a slightly greater buying power, has felt the squeeze of being on the margin of the Southern economy and has led the stream of outmigration during the last two decades. More than one and one-half million Negroes left the South between 1950 and 1960. This trend is cheered by some Southerners, who see a lessening of “racial tension” as the South’s percentage of Negroes goes down to below half of the nation, but it is also a net loss as productive potential and as a market for the regional product. American merchandisers have just begun to realize that the “Negro market” is larger than the total Canadian economy. The Negro is beginning to self-realize his economic power as reflected in the Montgomery bus strike, the sit-ins, the Philadelphia “selective buying” campaign, etc. Meanwhile, the irrationality of segregation and the whole white supremacist tradition limit and scar progress in the South.

An urban-industrial complex like Birmingham, for instance, hulking part of the economic “New South” has become a scene of violence, has closed its city parks to avoid an integration order, has cut off its welfare relief (95% Negro) in retaliation against a Negro buying Boycott, has fallen into irrational city politics at the hands of racists, and remains enslaved in the impasse between racist tradition and economic progress. Some Southerners still hold to the idea that both white supremacy and industrialism can be attained. The front-running candidate in the Alabama gubernatorial primary has pledged to go to jail to avoid integration and to get an industrial plant in every county. It is not necessarily so that industrialism is impossible with racism; Hitler proved that.

Despite an increase in population in the Deep South during the last decade, in all states except Florida more people left than came in. Besides the large Negro outmigration, a great number of skilled and educated young persons of both races left the region after scarce regional resources had been spent on their training.

Another trend has been the shift in population from the economically overcrowded farm’s to the city. In the six states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, for instance, 80% of the counties had more people leave than came in between 1950 and 1955. There has been a “population explosion” in the new metropolitan areas, but the cities have not coped with their new population very effectively. The “urban tenant” is more helpless and more in need of higher levels of income than the “rural tenant.” Welfare, medical, and re-employment programs have been sparse. Housing and community development programs have lagged critically. Three Southern states—Florida, Louisiana, and South Carolina—don’t even allow urban renewal. In other cases the programs turn into “Negro removal” projects without adequate provisions for resettlement. Large metropolitan areas are becoming increasingly segregated as whites scamper to the political and fiscal irresponsibility of the suburbs and the Negro and low income whites are left to the shrinking, blighted “central city” with no place else to go. It is interesting to note that in Atlanta Negroes comprise one-third of the population but are able to occupy only one-sixth of the residential land. More than half a million blighted houses are reported in the 1959 Census of the six-state Atlanta Federal Reserve district.

Southern agriculture is still the largest problem area. More than three-fourths of the farms in the South are less than 25 acres (only 5% more than 100 acres). One half of the nation’s farm families live in the South yet only one third of the nation’s farm product is from that region. Net income per family in the South is less than two-thirds of that of farm families outside. Forty-seven of the fifty-one economic areas in the United States with median farm family income less than \$1000 are in the South. The South has only 13% of the commercial farms in the nation but 70% of the commercial farms with less than \$2500 income. Definite progress has been made in developing larger, more viable farm units; livestock and a variety of cash crops have supplanted King Cotton; fertilizers, hybrid seeds, scientific conservation measures, and mechanization have all contributed larger income potential. But thousands of marginal farmers, tenants and freeholders, are stranded in rural areas without any prospect of betterment. Even more unfortunate are the uprooted migrant workers who are helping in the South. Better education is needed (less than one-third of farm children make it to college in the South), more credit for large, productive farm units should be made available and well-planned programs of outmigration should be carried out. Of course, America’s policies toward world use of agricultural abundance must change as well.

The “industrial mix” of the South is still rather “soft,” featuring the natural resource-use industries of textiles, lumber, and food processing. Chemicals, heavy manufacturing, electronics,

and other high-technology plants are relatively shy of the South, often because of a lack of skilled workers. Industrial wages have been rising but are still considerable below natural scales. Unionization has been beaten down since the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century in the South by use of race intimidation and outright violence and social pressure, as well as local and state “right-to-work”-type laws. Thus democratic participation of workers in the economic decision-making lags as well. The nearest thing to economic decision-making in the economic sphere is in the rural cooperatives for feed and equipment, storage, electricity, ginning and processing, stockyards and slaughterhouses, etc. Some “community development” programs have brought together many different citizens for local economic planning and promotion, but this has been dominated by Chamber of Commerce approaches.

During the Depression of the Thirties the South learned a number of lessons. (1) First, that the South is not a separate regional compartment but is part and parcel of the national and international economy. The South was the hardest hit of any region by the national depression, (2) Second, that federal assistance is needed if the South is to reach its potential. President Roosevelt, in calling the nation’s attention to the South’s plight, responded with leadership and federal programs that included TVA, WPA, CCC, agriculture adjustment programs, and assistance for regional study and planning. With this impetus from the federal government the most comprehensive program of research and planning in the South took place in the thirties. Professor Howard Odum of the University of North Carolina and many others formed the “regional school” of economists, sociologists, planners, anthropologists, geographers, etc., who, in the Southern Regions and other publications surveyed the resources of Dixie and planned for their best use. With the encouragement of the National Resources Planning Board state planning boards were established to deal rationally with problems of underdevelopment throughout the South.

During World War II much of this vision of the Thirties was lost. The South came to depend upon military expenditure for its “public works.” Muscle Shoals shifted from fertilizer to explosives. TVA power laid the basis for Oak Ridge’s nuclear weapons research. Lockhead, Raytheon, Dupont nuclear fuels plant, Pine Buff Arsenal, Cape Canaveral, Redstone Arsenal and Missile Center—these are the “public works” the South now depends upon. This has tainted the Southerner’s view of the Cold War and has narrowed his perspective on government participation in the economy.

The “planning movement” of the Thirties has become the “promotion movement” of the post-war years. Draftsmen and social scientist have been replaced by hucksters and industrial [Unreadable line] Persuade a Yankee plant, any kind, to locate in your town.” Rational planning and “developmental concern with health, education, housing, and welfare have taken a back seat to the full-speed- [Unreadable line] two and one-half million dollars a year on “industrial and tourist promotion.” Communities have gambled their public credit on give-away bond issues and have guaranteed low wages to pull shift plants and processing firms in their area. This has made for grab-bag growth and uneven, “soft” development. There is a desperate need to pull these pieces together and to concentrate on coordinating public approaches to “development” with emphasis on the underdevelopment of human resources (training, health, housing and urban renewal, expanded welfare programs) as well as the need for external investment.

Sadly, many Southern Congressmen have been locked in a coalition with conservative Northern Republicans and have been less concerned with, in fact opposed to, legislation to help the South.

The heart of opposition to federal aid to education, expanded medical programs, improved housing and urban renewal, area redevelopment and public works programs are Dixiecrat Congressmen. This stems partially from the double-standard of States' Rights (remain independent on race but get as much federal aid as possible) becoming a single negative standard and irrational fears of federal programs being used to destroy segregation. It is also the result of Southern dependence on Northern investment and the desire to build a "conservative" climate to attract it. The basis of the Dixiecrat-GOP coalition goes all the way back to the "compromise of 1876" with the calling off of Reconstruction for the guarantee of Hayes' election and continued Northern industrial dominance of the South. FDR broke through this coalition to some extent, but the Post-War scene and the rise of the Cold War have seen a hardening of it.

The pioneering work of the TVA has trickled down to maintaining the public power establishment. The "creeping conservatism" of TVA is less the fault of the Authority itself and more the fault of the vision (or lack of it) of Congress and the Executive. Bold, new economic development authority is needed across the tributaries of the Tennessee, throughout the Southern Appalachian area, through the Alabama River basin and elsewhere. The Area Redevelopment Administration program has been thus far essentially only a piece-meal loan and grant program to meet immediate "plant-attraction" needs with a few re-training experiments thrown in. The Public Works Bill now up for approval in Congress would speed up spending for public facilities, but there still is a need for long-run public authority to develop the natural and human resources of the South. The same zeal that brought the Peace Corps (does the President have another brother-in-law?) should be dedicated to a "Domestic Peace Corps" which emphasizes the need to fight poverty in the depressed "pockets" (involving, however, as many as \$40 of the American people) where it exists in the so-called Affluent Society.

It must be recognized that "progress"—growth of gross product and increase in average per capita income—does not automatically bring justice. As Mike Harrington has suggested in his new book, *The Other America*, poverty is a "culture" that must be attacked from many directions at once to break its vicious circle. And despite the rise of urban industrialism across Dixie, racism still haunts the region. The Negro is still the most underdeveloped resource in America. His plight is greatest in the South. Attempts to preserve segregation corrode politics and obfuscate all other issues, prevent effective worker organization, lead to irrational plant organization (South Carolina has a law that prohibits whites and Negroes from working in the same textile plant), curb efforts to attract industry (Little Rock got no industrial nibbles for three years after Faubus closed the schools, though things had been booming before that), add to the "welfare" burden and make the administration of welfare programs discriminatory and prevent positive programs from being launched (an Area Redevelopment tractor-training program in the Mississippi Delta area was clocked by local politicians because there were fears that the interracial project would change the existing status of Negro farm laborers).

Agriculture is not being totally replaced by manufacturing in the South but is changing its form to become more productive. "Industrial agriculture" on larger farms with less persons employed is the future trend (farm employment in the six-state Atlanta area declined 22% to 11% of the total employment from 1950 to 1960). This means that provision must be made for the margin farm worker doomed by technology to find a more productive way of life and make a satisfactory transition to non-agricultural employment. This should not be left to the cruel process of forcing farmers to starvation levels or staging Reverse Freedom Rides to ship persons out of the South. Hopefully, the South can find a use for all its human resources and concentrate on

shifting persons from farm employment in the South to productive employment off the farm in the South.

At one time the South was an “internationalist” producer of primary products, especially cotton, for foreign manufacturers. Opposition by the South to stiff national tariffs for protection of Northern “infant industries” was one of the official interregional issues at the time of the Civil War. However, the South has now become the most “protectionist” region in the country about its “infant industries.” The 1959 Southern Governors Conference called for more protection of Southern manufactures from foreign competition. This is clearly a block to the greatest possible flow of economic goods and is only a short-run view to protect marginal firms, textiles in particular. Just as the Southern contribution to Cold War tensions because of its zeal for military public works must be seen in broader perspective—so must the rise of protectionism in the South.

As we view the Southern “mixed economy” in 1962 it is clear that vast changes are taking place in the structure of production, the distribution of population, and, more slowly in the social structure. It is important that “New South” fever not take away our critical judgment of the status quo of discrimination and poverty and undemocratic processes that still pervades the South. Southern leaders should not allow the region to make economic growth only a veneer and a “trickle-down” factor that ignores the traditional problems. There is a need for broad secular changes if the “new South” is to be a well-balanced and just society where all its citizens have the opportunity to grow and live in freedom. There is a crying need for broader expenditure for education, training, and research, for more basic community facilities such as sewerage, water plants, roads, for more diversified capital investment in manufacturing with emphasis on “growth” industries such as electronics and more intensive investment in agriculture with emphasis on “industrial agriculture,” for direct assistance to the poverty-stricken, for elimination of the walls of race and region that leave literally millions of Southerners of both races still living as second-class citizens.

The Southern potential is great. Its topography, soil, climate, water, forests, and mineral resources are abundant. Electrical, nuclear, and solar energy can be produced with relative ease in the Southern environment. The South’s greatest untapped resource is its people. It could accommodate four or five times the amount of industrial employment it has now. Its biggest problem is not “unemployment” but “underemployment.” Healthy transition from the economy built around the plantation and the one-man farm to an economy of large-scale industrial manufacturing and large-scale mechanized agriculture must be made with full opportunity for all its people. The South has almost one-fifth of the nation’s land and one-fifth of the nation’s people. The land must be used more wisely, more intensively. The people must be trained and educated to face the challenges of an industrial economy.

Many of the problems of Southern “economic development” are national problems writ large. The same muddled conceptions of the “mixed economy” that leave the nation subject to irrational laissez-faire attacks on Big Government and Poujadist anti-tax movements, Defense as public works, Welfare as vested interest rather than lever to opportunity—all haunt the South in double order. Add to this the problem of discrimination written into public law and hardened custom and our image of “another South” is clearly at odds with many contemporary facts.

What we are after is economic progress with justice—opportunity for all Southern citizens. The region cannot be visualized apart from its national and world context, but it can be a beginning for attacking the problems that plague the globe. A “rurban” South living with ease between uncrowded decentralized, integrated, “greenbelt” communities and centers of intensive, high-technology, democratically-controlled agricultural and manufacturing industry where all



persons participate in economic and political decision-making bound together by broad metropolitan units of government; this is one glance at what the South could become. All persons must be “skilled and educated and mobile—able to participate in the ongoing economy with full opportunity to grow within it. Urban sprawl without political unity and rural transition without political democratization must be translated into broad “metro” units that plan for needed public facilities, that supply a “floor” under poverty, that assume equal opportunity according to ability and training, that plan for beauty and access to the bounty of Southern natural surroundings as well as economic facility, and that strive to make educational centers open and alive to prepare citizens for full, self-conscious, critical participation in society. Racism must be hammered out of the system. The politics must be open to all. Community development should involve all constituents. Service and the cooperative principle should guide economic decision-making—with as much participation as possible by all persons. This is the projection, the goal, the dream.

Where are we to make our beginnings?

(1) Knowledge must become relevant in the South. The social sciences and the technical-industrial sciences must unite in eliminating the irrationalities of the Southern System that make economic progress ambiguous and superficial.

(2) Racism and segregation must be eliminated in all places, all sectors, before the “New South” has even a chance of being anything more than grafting an industrial complex onto the old social structure with built-in alienation and discrimination. Only when the Negro is free of closed doors and the white is free of preoccupation with the Negro can the Southern economy grow to the benefit of all. Attacks on segregation are economically sound—they are necessary to make the “resources” of the South sufficiently free mobile, and developed to contribute to the greatest possible economic advance. The “dislocation” or “tension” that a sit-in or boycott might bring to a community one day are not debilitating to the economy if in the long-run they bring a new, freer role for the Negro and the white in the society.

(3) Poverty must be attacked directly, just as discrimination must, as a vicious circle. A new “land grant” type program is needed to expand education, health, and housing opportunities for all Southerners. Regional development authorities should be established not only to produce more electrical power but to plan for the development of depressed “pockets” throughout the South. Public works programs are needed immediately. Long-range planning and careful investment, particularly in intensive, large-unit agriculture and experimental, high-growth-potential industry, must be made. Social and industrial research should become the preoccupation of Southern leaders and Southern public finance with federal help.

(4) Cooperative federalism must be advanced; negative states’ rights must be buried. The South needs federal grants-in-aid for education, planning, research, and training, expanded health and welfare programs, urban renewal and housing, highway construction, water, power, and resource development, recreation and parks programs, etc.

(5) The Southern economy should be viewed not as an antagonism between city and rural areas, between farms and factories, but as a continuum that is increasingly interdependent. Credit expansion for viable farm production helps cities. New manufacturing industries are crucial for agricultural growth. Technical education is needed by all persons, urban or rural. “Tenantry” and poverty must be attacked with equal fervor in the urban slums and on the marginal, eroded acres. Planning is needed in rural towns as well as in growing metropolitan areas.

(6) All efforts to increase worker participation in economic decision-making must be made. Unionization must be advanced. More experiments in cooperative development must be made (for instance, Negro freeholders in Mississippi, who are living on small, marginal plots of land and are shut out of the segregated society, should be aided in more cooperative efforts: equipment-buying, ginning, marketing, etc.). Local and state, as well as federal, units of government must strive to unite and coordinate public efforts to make all endeavor subject to the electorate. Needless to say, Southern politics must be democratized, demythologized, racially integrated, pluralized, and made issue-relevant before efficient, effective, and truly “representative” government can be expected in the South—and the needed advances in public economic development can be made.

(7) Experimentation with non-military public works must grow. Only if Southerners, as well as all Americans, can conceive of power plants, hospitals, highways, experimental factories and farms replacing airplane-building, explosives-production, and military posts as the base of public “pump-priming” expenditure, can the efforts for a disarmament agreement be on solid ground—and, equally important, can the actual process of staged transition from Cold War production to peacetime production be workable. Regional development authorities, public works efforts, hospital construction programs, farm credit plans (where discretion is made about the sort of units getting assistance according to economic growth feasibility), urban renewal and housing programs, Domestic Peace Corps—all must be seen in this “Transition Matrix” as well as in terms of the specific needs and the “mix” between public and private investment.

These are just a few suggestions. The most important thing is that Southerners are aware of the actual trends and problems of the region and are willing to apply their knowledge to political intervention for positive change. Southerners must consider the national and international implications of “Southern progress” according to present patterns. Also, Southerners should realize the opportunity that the South offers as a place to face some of the worst problems of the world: racism, poverty, militarism, undemocratic politics, irrational and unbalanced development.

While the South is not one of the undeveloped areas of the world, it is underdeveloped in many ways, particularly in its human resources. Though the people and the natural surroundings of the South are dear to many Southerners, the stark problems of the past and present in the South must be faced for what they are.

In the words of Walter Hines Page:

“We look forward to a golden age that we may surely help to bring, not back to one that never was.”

*Written by Robb K. Burlage (1962?) Distributed by Students for a Democratic Society for the Liberal Study Group [and] National Student Association Congress.*

## ***THE POOR IN AMERICA***

### CONCEPT

Contrasting economic situation of Negroes and whites. Are we poor?

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION IN FREEDOM SCHOOLS

1. Who are the poor people in America?

Do we have enough money, enough food to eat, and enough clothing to keep warm, and enough beds in our house so that everyone in our family can have a place to sleep? Do we have electricity, and running water, and refrigerators, and toilets? Do we have other things, like T.V. sets, food freezers, clothes washers and dryers, air conditioners, and cars? Do we need some or all of these things? Are we poor?

2. Who is not poor in America? Are most white people you know about poor? Are some white people poor?

What kind s of houses do white people you know about live in? Do they have electricity, and running water, and toilets, and many of the other things we mentioned before? Are most of them poor?

### CONCEPT

Why people are poor

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION IN FREEDOM SCHOOLS

3. Why are people poor?

-Some people say it's because we are lazy, or stupid, and don't really want to work; is this true?

-Is it because we are Negro?

-Because we live in the South?

-Because we have little education and few skills?

-Because there are not enough jobs? Why not? Are our jobs being taken away by machines?

-Because we are old?

-Because we are sick?

-Because nobody, including the federal government cares enough about poor people to do anything about poverty?

-For all of these, and some other reasons?

### CONCEPT

Who decides who shall be poor and who shall not: the owners of the plantations, farms, and factories; also discriminatory labor unions.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION IN FREEDOM SCHOOLS

4. Who decided what kinds of jobs Negroes can get?

-The white man who owns the plantation?

-The white man who owns the farm?

- The white men who own and run the factories?
  - Who are the owners of most of the plantations and farms where we live? Why are most of them white and few of them Negro? How much money do these owners make? Why do they make so much more than we do: is it because they work harder than we do? What kinds of houses do they live in?
  - What are the biggest plants and factories in your town? Your state? Who runs them? How do plants make money (legal and illegal ways)? How much money do the men who run the plants make? How much do the people who run the machines and do the other labor inside the plants make?
  - Do you know any Negroes who work in the plants? What kinds of jobs do they do? What kinds of jobs do the white people who work in the plants do? How much do Negroes who work in the plant earn?
  - Whites? Is there a union in the plant? Does the union help Negroes as much as it helps the whites, or does the Union also discriminate against Negroes? (Does the union make sure that Negroes who do the same work as whites get paid as much as whites? Does it make sure that Negroes get promoted to better, higher-paying jobs as often as whites? Does it make sure that the plant hires Negroes? Does the union protect the jobs of Negroes who try to register to vote, or who, in other ways, support the civil rights movement?)

### CONCEPT

How we can change things so that Negroes and other poor people will have jobs, and better, higher paying jobs.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION IN FREEDOM SCHOOLS

5. How can we change things so that Negroes and other poor people can get good jobs?
  - What is a “good” job? How do we feel about the work we do? Does your mother like her job? Your father? What is work?
  - Should we organize ourselves into unions so we will be strong against the men who hire and fire—the bosses?
  - If we do organize into unions, should they be independent, or should they be part of larger, already-existing unions? What are the advantages and disadvantages of this?
  - Should we try to gain power through the vote?
  - What other kinds of things can we do?

## RESOURCE MATERIALS FOR USE IN DISCUSSION ON THE POOR IN AMERICA

Most Americans are not poor. In fact, most of them are rich compared to the people around the world, and to most of us. The average family of four in America makes about \$7,000 to \$8,000 each year. Most Americans live in homes they own themselves (although many of them own them on long-term mortgages); these homes have electricity, running water, and bathrooms. Many of them (in fact, one-sixth of them) have clothes dryers, food freezers, and air conditioners.) Most Americans take good care of themselves, too; they visit their doctor 5 times a year, and their dentist 3.

But among all of these fairly rich people live 40 to 50 MILLION poor people. A family that earns less than \$3,000 a year is poor, because \$3,000 is not enough to buy all of the food, clothing, schoolbooks, and other things people need, nor to pay the rent, the doctor bills, the phone bills, and other bills that a family has to pay.

Why are poor people poor? Some people, usually the rich ones, say that “poor people are just too lazy to work hard; they don’t really want to work, and besides that, many of them are really too stupid to get a job. Therefore, the poor don’t deserve anything better. They should be poor.” But we know that many of us, and many of our mothers and fathers, work very hard. Our fathers bend over all day long in the hot sun picking and chopping cotton. Our mothers scrub floors, and toilets, and wash clothes, and cook meals for white women all day long. And sometimes we work too, for long hours, in the fields. Yet still we are poor. So we can’t be poor because we are lazy and don’t want to work; we work very hard, but we are poor. Why?

We are poor because we are Negroes and because we live in the South. There are not many jobs in the South, and many of them—especially the ones Negroes can get—don’t pay very much. There is a law passed by the U.S. Congress, that says everyone who works in some kinds of jobs must get paid at least \$1.25 per hour. But most of the jobs we do are not covered by this law; all people who work on plantations or farms, and all maids are not covered by this law. They can be paid whatever the boss can get away with paying them. So many of us get paid only \$2.50 or \$3.00 for working a whole day in the cotton fields; many of us get paid only \$10 each week for working as maids for white women.

To see what kinds of jobs people who are not white (95% of all people who are not white are Negro; others are Puerto Rican, Indian, and others), look at the Table below:

<u>JOB</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE OF NON-WHITES HOLDING THESE JOBS</u>
Professional, technical	4.7
Manager, officials, other bosses	2.1
Office workers, clerks	3.7
Skilled craftsmen, foremen	4.7
Machine operators	10.8
Service workers (like gas station men); (Not including maids)	20.2
Laborers (not including farm and mine workers)	25.7
Household workers, like maids	54.3
Farmers and farm workers (sharecroppers, migrants, etc.)	14.4

You can easily see from this Table that Negroes and other non-whites have very few good, well-paying jobs, and most of the hard, bad-paying dirty ones.

Now what about how much money non-white people make? The Table below shows what a big difference there is between what most non-white people make, as compared with what most white people make.

Whites	\$5,424
Nonwhites	\$3,058

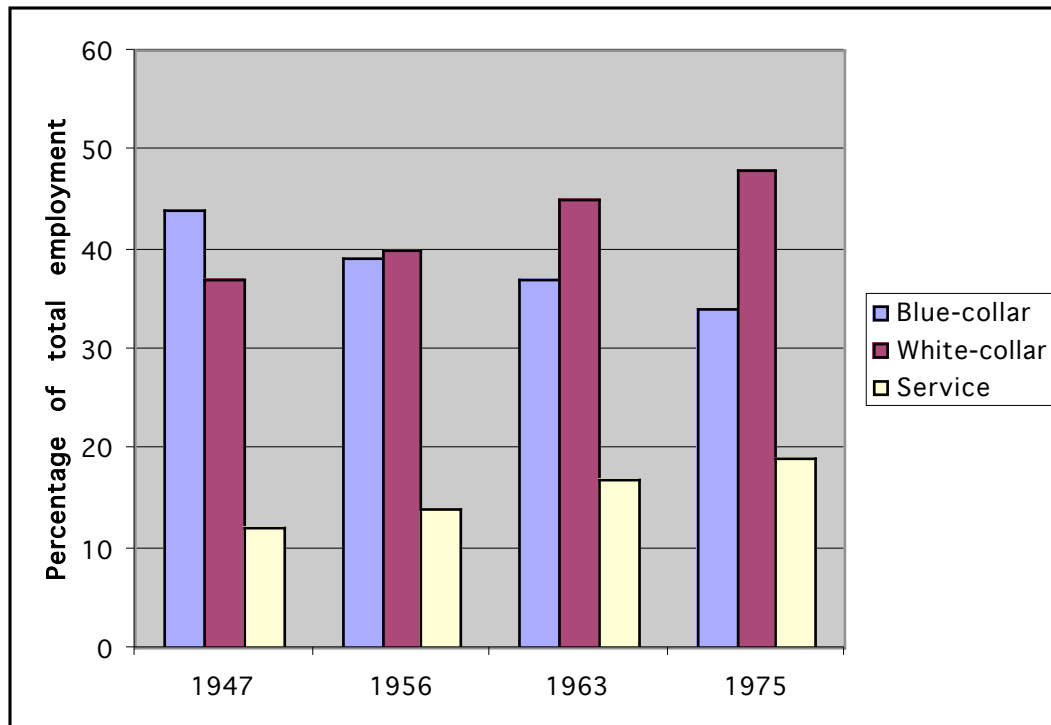
Nonwhites, then, earn only a little more than one half of what white people make, or 56%.

What does automation, or the replacing of working men by machines, have to do with this?

Our country has always believed in the idea that if a man worked—if he helped to produce the goods people in our country need and want to buy—then he could earn enough money to buy these goods for himself and his family as well. But now the machines are doing the work of producing the goods, and the men have no jobs. This means they earn no money to buy the goods with. So many of the goods—like rice and cotton—are not bought. Instead, they are stored, by the U.S. Government, in huge storage bins, warehouses, and other places. The Government spends \$1 billion each year storing these things. Meanwhile, about 40 to 50 million people live in poverty.

How many people loose their jobs because of the machines? No one knows exactly how many, but some people guess that it is around 40,000 every week. We do know that the unemployment rate (the number of people out of work) is 5.5% of the total labor force. This is twice as high as any other major industrial country. Teenagers have an even higher unemployment rate; it is 15%, and for high-school dropouts 30%. For teenagers who live in the ghettoes of northern cities, it is often as high as 50%.

Machines are not taking everyone's jobs away. They are taking away mostly the jobs we call blue-collar—the jobs where people with their hands as farmers, miners, factory hands, and the like. The number of blue-collar jobs open to people is dropping every year. But the number of jobs open to white-collar workers, like doctors, teachers, lawyers, technicians, and the like, is increasing every year. Service jobs, too, are increasing. The Table below shows that this is so.



Source: U.S Department of Labor

Most of the people who write about, or talk about the problem of automation think that the responsibility for doing something about poverty lies with the federal government. This is because they think that only the federal government has enough money and enough power to really solve the problems of poverty and unemployment. The federal government has done some things already. Let's look at what these are.

There are three main programs the federal government has developed recently to deal with the problem of unemployment and automation. These are:

- 1) The Area Redevelopment Act, passed 1961
- 2) The Manpower Development and Training Act, passed in 1962 (MDTA)
- 3) The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964—Johnson's War on Poverty.

### The Area Redevelopment Act

This act provides federal help (in the form of loans, grant, advice, and training programs) to areas which are economically underdeveloped. An area is considered a "redevelopment area" if it has continued and widespread unemployment. In order to be eligible for federal assistance, a local committee in such an area, which must be representative of the community, gets together and outlines a plan for economic development of that area.

Over 75 counties and other areas in Mississippi were listed by the U.S. Department of Labor in 1963 as eligible for ARA programs—many of them because of the low incomes of Negro families. Despite this fact, there were no ARA training programs in Mississippi in 1961. In all, only about 160 Negroes in the entire South were trained under the ARA, even though Negroes make up a very high percentage of the unemployed in the south. Part of the problem with the ARA in the South is that its programs must be approved by the state concerned before loans can

be made. This makes it difficult if not impossible for Negro communities to benefit from ARA programs; and as a result, the ARA has no real importance in the South for Negroes.

The major thing wrong with the ARA program is that it is too small. In its first three years the program trained only 35,000 workers and helped create between 110,000 and 115,000 jobs (according to the U.S. Department of Labor.) There are approximately 4 million who would seek work if they thought there was any chance of finding it. So you can see that this small government program was not nearly big enough to solve the problem of unemployment.

In June of 1963 the Senate agreed to set aside new funds so that the ARA program could continue. But the House refused to agree to this, so the program has been discontinued. It will get no more additional money.

### The Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA)

This program, paid for jointly by the state and the federal government, and run by the states, was set up to train workers for jobs which had been found through research, labor market surveys, and other means. In other words, it was not set up to create new jobs, but rather to match unemployed workers with jobs that were already available. To be in this program, a person had to be one of the following:

- unemployed, and a member of a family whose income was less than \$1200 a year
- working at a job below their skill level
- working much less than full time
- working in a job that would soon be taken over by a machine
- between the ages of 16 and 22 and in need of training and more education

The main things wrong with this program, like the ARA, is that it is too small. In 1963, the MDTA had 1,622 projects, with 59,595 men being trained. In the four states of the Deep South (Ala., Ga., La., and Miss.) there were 51 projects, with 2,099 men being trained. The breakdown by states was:

	<u>Projects</u>	<u>Trainees</u>
Alabama	30	1,569
Mississippi	5	125
Louisiana	--	--
Georgia	<u>16</u>	<u>405</u>
Total	51	2,099

### The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964—Johnson’s “War” on Poverty.

There are five key programs set up by this Act:

- 1) The Job Corps will offer work, training and new surroundings for 40,000 boys and girls in 1965 and 100,000 by 1966, with most of them coming from the slums, and being high-school drop-outs. The young people will be paid \$50 a month. One staff person will work with every 5 young people in the program. Training will take place in national park, forest facilities, veterans’ hospitals and other areas far away from the slums.



- 2) Youth Work-training program for about 200,000 young people. This will try to keep potential school dropouts in school. The students will earn enough money in various jobs in federal, state, and private agencies, to allow them to stay in school—or to return to school if they have already dropped out and wish to return.
- 3) Work-study programs will give 140,000 college students part-time jobs and vacation work in labs, libraries, and so forth, with costs shared by the U.S. Government and the University. This is to help students get enough money to stay in school.
- 4) Community Action Program will give funds to communities to help them fight poverty in their community. Plans will be made by the people in the community. These will probably be things like community centers, playgrounds, adult-education facilities, and health clinics.
- 5) Adult Work-Training programs will try to retrain and find jobs for people on relief. There is a literacy program for adults included.

Again, the problem with this program is that it is too small. A mere \$784 million has been set-aside for it. To see how small this amount is, we can compare it with the other 42 agencies and programs of the federal government which deal in some way or another with poverty; their total budget was \$15 BILLION in 1964. So Johnson's "War" is not really a "War" at all. It is more like a minor skirmish.

There are two other things wrong with this program. First, everybody who is to receive anything through the program must first sign a loyalty oath. Secondly, every program proposed by the people of a community is subject to a veto by the Governor of the state.

(Information from the Research Dept. of the United Packinghouse, Food and Allied Workers, and from the Act.)

### UNIONS, BOSSES AND NEGROES

One way that working people have been able to get higher wages, shorter working hours, and better working conditions is by forming a union. A union is simply a group of people who join together and tell their 'boss' that they will not work for less than a certain amount of money, for more than a certain number of hours, and only under certain conditions. If the boss refuses to agree to their demands, and to sign a written contract, then the workers strike; that is, they refuse to work until the boss agrees to their demands. Some people say that we should organize ourselves into unions and strike against our 'bosses'—the plantation, farm, and factory owners. Can we do this? What are some of the problems we would face? What are the risks we would take? What could we gain? If we do organize, should we form independent unions, or should we join up with one of the big unions that already exists? What would be the advantages and disadvantages of this?

There is one big problem that working people face when they join unions and strike, especially in the southern states. If they have jobs which are not very skilled jobs (that is, jobs which somebody else would learn to do quickly without much training), then they can be replaced very easily when they go on strike. And when there are many, many people who don't have any jobs at all (as there are in the South), then these people who don't have jobs can be hired to take the place of the people who go on strike. What happens then is that the people who went on strike sooner or later lose their jobs completely (one year after their contract runs out, if they were in a

union before). But the boss doesn't lose any money because he has been able to hire new workers to take the place of the strikers.

The only way to prevent this from happening (short of violence), is to organize EVERYBODY in the whole town—to organize all of the workers and all of the people without jobs, so that they won't take the jobs of the people on strike. This is very hard to do, because the people who don't have jobs usually want jobs so much that they will take the jobs of the people who are on strike no matter what the people on strike say to them. It is hard for these people to see that it would be better, in the long run, if nobody agreed to work for a boss unless he paid them enough and met their other demands as well. So this is one big problem we would face. We would have to organize nearly everybody in order to win a strike.

There is another problem with unions in the South. That is that if we organize on the plantations and the farms, and demand higher wages, then the farm or plantation owner might decide that it would be cheaper and less trouble for him in the long run if he brought in machines to do the work which we do now. And there are machines which can do most of the work we do; so the farmer could bring these machines in tomorrow if he wanted to. He would then have to hire only a few people to run the machines, and the rest of us would all be out of work.

Finally, there is one more thing we should think about, one more problem we might run into if we organize. If we organize all of the maids in a town, and they demand higher wages and shorter hours, some of the white ladies who now hire maids wouldn't be able to afford them any more. They would fire the maids and do the work themselves. Some of the white ladies who now have jobs (because their maids do all their housework and cooking, and take care of their children for them), might have to quit these jobs; But most of them would probably find a way to do this work themselves and still keep their jobs. (They might, for example, share the baby-sitting job with their neighbors). So, if we organize ourselves we might find that some of us would keep our jobs and get higher wages, but many others of us might find ourselves out of work.

But let's suppose that we think about all of these problems, and we decide that the circumstances where we work are such that we think we can better our lot if we organize into unions, and, possibly strike. The next question we need to think about is whether we should form independent unions, or whether we should join ourselves up with one of the big unions that has branches (called 'locals') all around the country. To answer this question we need to know something about these big unions—about how they treat Negro workers.

Most of the big unions have written, formal policies against discrimination; but many of them don't pay much attention to these formal policies, and they do discriminate against Negroes. Some of the most important ways they discriminate are:

1. excluding Negroes from membership
2. having segregated locals
3. controlling whether any Negroes are hired in the plant, and if so, how many
4. controlling what kinds of jobs Negroes get, and whether or not Negroes get promoted as fast and as far as whites.

### *Membership and Segregated Locals*

Very few unions still exclude Negroes completely from their membership; in fact, only three still do. By the Civil Rights Act of 1964, such exclusion is now outlawed.

In the past, unions which didn't keep Negroes out altogether often formed segregated locals. Often, Negroes wanted to keep the locals segregated as much as whites did; This was because in

the segregated locals Negroes could hold offices in the Negro union, and have some say over their own affairs. They knew that if they joined up with the white local, they would have little chance of holding office and little say about anything that went on in the union. This is still the case in some places, particularly in the South, where segregated locals still exist.

### *Hiring*

Sometimes unions set up a 'hiring hall'; the bosses agree to hire nobody except people the union send to him through the hiring hall. By excluding Negroes from membership in the union, the union can keep Negroes from getting any jobs in a particular plant at all. Or they can carefully control the number of Negroes who do get hired and what kinds of jobs they get.

### *Job Opportunities*

In addition to the hiring halls, unions sometimes set up referral systems. In this case, Negroes must go to the union first to be referred to a job opening. Unions which discriminate refer Negroes only to the worst, lowest-paying jobs; often, whites don't even have to use the referral system but are informed of job openings by the union by telephone.

Another way unions keep Negroes from getting good jobs is by keeping them out of training and apprenticeship programs. If the Negro never gets a chance to get trained for a skilled job, he is 'not qualified' when an opening occurs in that job category.

But the main way that unions control the jobs that Negroes get is by putting pressure on the employers. They tell the employers that if Negroes are hired, or hired for good, high-paying position, then the white employees will strike. (Often this is a bluff; and a firm statement by the employer (the boss) is enough to put down any resistance white workers have to Negroes being hired.)

### *Unions in the South*

Unions in the South discriminate more than do unions in the North, as we might expect. Some of them have set up separate lines of promotion for whites and Negroes. Negroes can be promoted up the job line just so far, and then no farther. Thus, there is a top limit to the kinds of jobs Negroes can get and how much they can earn. Usually, Negroes' jobs are limited to unskilled, menial laboring and serviced jobs. Sometimes Negroes are allowed to transfer into better, higher paying jobs, but only by losing all of the years of seniority they have accumulated since they began working in a plant.

One cannot criticize all unions in the South, because there are some where Negroes are organized and protected and promoted as fairly as whites. One finds this to be true in the fertilizer, food processing, logging, lumber, meatpacking unions. These unions are exceptions to the general rule, however. Overall, unions in the South have hurt rather than helped Negroes.

### *Discrimination by Bosses*

Bosses, men who run the plants, discriminate against Negroes just as do some unions. The most important ways they discriminate are:

- 1) In recruiting workers

- 2) In hiring
- 3) In making work assignments
- 4) In promotions
- 5) In training of workers

### Recruiting.

This is sometimes hard to see, because discrimination in recruiting goes on ‘behind closed doors.’ Sometimes there are special unwritten agreements or ‘understandings’ between public or private employment agencies and the bosses, whereby the agency will not refer Negroes to the bosses for hiring. (The Civil Rights Act of 1964 makes this illegal.)

Another way bosses discriminate in recruiting workers is by recruiting them from all white high schools or colleges, or from all white neighborhoods.

A third way is for employers, bosses, to recruit workers only from among friends and relatives of people (mostly whites) already working in the plants.

Finally, discrimination occurs in the hiring halls, as we mentioned above.

### *Hiring*

Discrimination in hiring is much easier to see than discrimination in recruiting. Most bosses will now hire some Negroes, but usually only for semi-skilled or unskilled jobs. (54% of all domestic workers are non-whites; many service workers, like janitors, are non-whites. Only 4.7% of all professional and technical people are non-whites.)

Since the civil rights movement began to demand more and better jobs for Negroes, some of these better jobs have been opening up. But many times Negroes do not have the skills that are needed to fill these jobs. The question of what should be done about this—whether special training programs should be set up, night classes for high school dropout, or what—is one we should talk about.

### *Promotion*

There are many different ways Negroes are discriminated against in promotions. Sometimes Negroes are simply overlooked, when a position opens up at a higher level in the plant. Sometimes these new positions demand special skills which can be learned only through training, and Negroes are excluded from the training programs. And sometimes Negroes are allowed to transfer to these better, higher-paying positions only by losing all seniority privileges.

### *Why employers practice racial discrimination*

In addition to prejudice on the part of some employers, there are other reasons why they discriminate against Negroes:

- 1) They are afraid that white customers, employees, labor unions, or the general white public will object, and that their businesses will suffer.
- 2) They do not think that qualified Negroes can be found for many of the higher-level positions.
- 3) They don’t feel like changing old practices unless someone pushed them to do so.

*Discrimination by Employment Agencies: Public and Private*

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 now outlaws discrimination by these agencies. But it will be a long time before such discrimination ends, especially in states where there is already a Fair Employment Practices Commission. The federal government will not step in in such cases until it is clear that the state commission isn't doing anything about discrimination. This takes time to prove.

*The Civil Rights Act of 1964*

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act makes some of the discriminatory practices we just talked about illegal. The Act says that:

- 1) No employer may fire you or refuse to hire you or discriminate against you in your wages and conditions of employment, or segregate or classify you in any way that might deprive you of job opportunities or of your rights as an employee, because of your race, color, religion, sex or national origin.
- 2) No employment agency may refuse to refer you for employment or classify you, or discriminate against you in any other way, because of your race, color, religion, sex or national origin.
- 3) No labor union may exclude you from membership, or discriminate against you, or segregate or classify its membership or refuse to refer you for employment or limit your employment opportunities in any way, or try to get an employer to discriminate against you, because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

These rules, if they are enforced, should do a great deal to end blatant discrimination. (They might be less effective in ending the more informal, difficult to prove types of discrimination—like unwritten agreements by employers to hire only whites, or few Negroes; or the use of personal influence to get jobs for whites).

To enforce the Act, a federal commission of five members is to be set up. This commission may cooperate with state, local, or other private or public agencies to make sure that Negroes get equal job opportunities. If there is already a state Fair Employment Practices Commission in operation, the federal commission may agree not to interfere with the work that this Commission is doing unless it feels it is necessary, in order to enforce the Civil Rights Act. The commission also has powers to make studies and recommendations, to mediate disputes, to conduct hearings, and to examine witnesses.

This part of the Civil Rights Act goes into effect this July. It applied, during the first year, to employers or unions that have at least 100 members; in the second year, to those which have 75 or more; in the third year to those with 50 or more, and in the fourth year, to those with 25 or more.

## ***THE TRIPLE REVOLUTION***

### **Cybernation    Weaponry    Human Rights**

#### The Ad Hoc Committee on the Triple Revolution

This statement is written in the recognition that mankind is at a historic conjuncture which demands a fundamental reexamination of existing values and institutions. At this time three separate and mutually reinforcing revolutions are taking place:

*The Cybernation Revolution:* A new era of production has begun. Its principles of organization are as different from those of the industrial era as those of the industrial era were different from the agricultural. The cybernation revolution has been brought about by the combination of the computer and the automated self-regulating machine. This results in a system of almost unlimited productive capacity which requires progressively less human labor. Cybernation is already reorganizing the economic and social system to meet its own needs.

*The Weaponry Revolution:* New forms of weaponry have been developed which cannot win wars but which can obliterate civilization. We are recognizing only now that the great weapons have eliminated war as a method for resolving international conflicts. The ever-present threat of total destruction is tempered by the knowledge of the final futility of war. The need of a "warless world" is generally recognized, though achieving it will be a long and frustrating process.

*The Human Rights Revolution:* A universal demand for full human rights is now clearly evident. It continues to be demonstrated in the civil rights movement within the United States. But this is only the local manifestation of a worldwide movement toward the establishment of social and political regimes in which every individual will feel valued and none will feel rejected on account of his race.

We are particularly concerned in this statement with the first of these revolutionary phenomena. This is not because we underestimate the significance of the other two. On the contrary, we affirm that it is the simultaneous occurrence and interaction of all three developments which make evident the necessity for radical alterations in attitude and policy. The adoption of just policies for coping with cybernation and for extending rights to all Americans is indispensable to the creation of an atmosphere in the U.S. in which the supreme issue, peace, can be reasonably debated and resolved.

#### Interaction of Three Revolutions

The Negro claims, as a matter of simple justice, his full share in America's economic and social life. He sees adequate employment opportunities as a chief means of attaining this goal: The March on Washington demanded freedom and jobs. The Negro's claim to a job is not being met. Negroes are the hardest-hit of the many groups being exiled from the economy by cybernation. Negro unemployment rates cannot be expected to drop substantially. Promises of jobs are a cruel and dangerous hoax on hundreds of thousands of Negroes and whites alike who are especially vulnerable to cybernation because of age or inadequate education.

The demand of the civil rights movement cannot be fulfilled within the present context of society. The Negro is trying to enter a social community and a tradition of work-and-income

which are in the process of vanishing even for the hitherto privileged white worker. Jobs are disappearing under the impact of highly efficient, progressively less costly machines.

The U.S. operates on the thesis, set out in the Employment Act of 1964, that every person will be able to obtain a job if he wishes to do so and that this job will provide him with resources adequate to live and maintain a family decently. Thus job-holding is the general mechanism through which economic resources are distributed. Those without work have access only to a minimal income, hardly sufficient to provide the necessities of life, and enabling those receiving it to function as only "minimum consumers." As a result, the goods and services which are needed by these crippled consumers, and which they would buy if they could, are not produced. This in turn deprives other workers of jobs, thus reducing their incomes and consumption.

Present excessive levels of unemployment would be multiplied several times if military and space expenditures did not continue to absorb ten per cent of the gross national product (i.e., the total goods and services produced). Some six to eight million people are employed as a direct result of purchases for space and military activities. At least an equal number hold their jobs as an indirect result of military or space expenditures. In recent years, the military and space budgets have absorbed a rising proportion of national production and formed a strong support for the economy.

However, these expenditures are coming in for more and more criticism, at least partially in recognition of the fact that nuclear weapons have eliminated war as an acceptable method for resolving international conflicts. Early in 1964, President Johnson ordered a curtailment of certain military expenditures. Defense Secretary McNamara is closing shipyards, airfields, and Army bases, and Congress is pressing the National Space Administration to economize. The future of these strong props to the economy is not as clear today as it was even a year ago.

### The Nature of the Cybernation Revolution

Cybernation is manifesting the characteristics of a revolution in production. These include the development of radically different techniques and the subsequent appearance of novel principles of the organization of production; a basic reordering of man's relationship to his environment; and a dramatic increase in total available and potential energy.

The major difference between the agricultural, industrial and cybernation revolutions is the speed at which they developed. The agricultural revolution began several thousand years ago in the Middle East. Centuries passed in the shift from a subsistence base of hunting and food-gathering to settled agriculture.

In contrast, it has been less than 200 years since the emergence of the industrial revolution, and direct and accurate knowledge of the new productive techniques has reached most of mankind. This swift dissemination of information is generally held to be the main factor leading to widespread industrialization.

While the major aspects of the cybernation revolution are for the moment restricted to the U.S., its effects are observable almost at once throughout the industrial world and large parts of the non-industrial world. Observation is rapidly followed by analysis and criticism. The problems posed by the cybernation revolution are part of a new era in the history of all mankind but they are first being faced by the people of the U.S. The way Americans cope with cybernation will influence the course of this phenomenon everywhere. This country is the stage on which the machines-and-man drama will first be played for the world to witness.

The fundamental problem posed by the cybernation revolution in the U.S. is that it invalidates the general mechanism so far employed to undergird people's rights as consumers. Up to this time economic resources have been distributed on the basis of contributions to production, with machines and men competing for employment on somewhat equal terms. In the developing cybernated system, potentially unlimited output can be achieved by systems of machines which will require little cooperation from human beings. As machines take over production from men, they absorb an increasing proportion of resources while the men who are displaced become dependent on minimal and unrelated government measures—unemployment insurance, social security, welfare payments. These measures are less and less able to disguise a historic paradox: That a substantial proportion of the population is subsisting on minimal incomes, often below the poverty line, at a time when sufficient productive potential is available to supply the needs of everyone in the U.S.

The existence of this paradox is denied or ignored by conventional economic analysis. The general economic approach argues that potential demand, which if filled would raise the number of jobs and provide incomes to those holding them, is underestimated. Most contemporary economic analysis states that all of the available labor force and industrial capacity is required to meet the needs of consumers and industry and to provide adequate public services: Schools, parks, roads, homes, decent cities, and clean water and air. It is further argued that demand could be increased, by a variety of standard techniques, to any desired extent by providing money and machines to improve the conditions of the billions of impoverished people elsewhere in the world, who need food and shelter, clothes and machinery and everything else the industrial nations take for granted.

There is no question that cybernation does increase the potential for the provision of funds to neglected public sectors. Nor is there any question that cybernation would make possible the abolition of poverty at home and abroad. But the industrial system does not possess any adequate mechanisms to permit these potentials to become realities. The industrial system was designed to produce an ever-increasing quantity of goods as efficiently as possible, and it was assumed that the distribution of the power to purchase these goods would occur almost automatically. The continuance of the income-through jobs link as the only major mechanism for distributing effective demand—for granting the right to consume—now acts as the main brake on the almost unlimited capacity of a cybernated productive system.

Recent administrations have proposed measures aimed at achieving a better distribution of resources, and at reducing unemployment and underemployment. A few of these proposals have been enacted. More often they have failed to secure congressional support. In every case, many members of Congress have criticized the proposed measures as departing from traditional principles for the allocation of resources and the encouragement of production. Abetted by budget-balancing economists and interest groups they have argued for the maintenance of an economic machine based on ideas of scarcity to deal with the facts of abundance produced by cybernation. This time-consuming criticism has slowed the workings of Congress and has thrown out of focus for that body the inter-related effects of the triple revolution.

An adequate distribution of the potential abundance of goods and services will be achieved only when it is understood that the major economic problem is not how to increase production but how to distribute the abundance that is the great potential of cybernation. There is an urgent need for a fundamental change in the mechanisms employed to insure consumer rights.



### Facts and Figures

No responsible observer would attempt to describe the exact pace or the full sweep of a phenomenon that is developing with the speed of cybernation. Some aspects of this revolution, however, are already clear:

- \* The rate of productivity increase has risen with the onset of cybernation.
- \* An industrial economic system postulated on scarcity has been unable to distribute the abundant goods and services produced by a cybernated system or potential in it.
- \* Surplus capacity and unemployment have thus co-existed at excessive levels over the last six years.
- \* The underlying cause of excessive unemployment is the fact that the capability of machines is rising more rapidly than the capacity of many human beings to keep pace.
- \* A permanent impoverished and jobless class is established in the midst of potential abundance.

Evidence for these statements follows:

1. The increased efficiency of machine systems is shown in the more rapid increase in productivity per man-hour since 1960, a year that marks the first visible upsurge of the cybernation revolution. In 1961, 1962 and 1963, productivity per man-hour rose at an average pace above three and a half per cent—a rate well above both the historical average and the postwar rate.

Companies are finding cybernation more and more attractive. Even at the present early stage of cybernation, costs have already been lowered to a point where the price of a durable machine may be as little as one-third of the current annual wage-cost of the worker it replaces. A more rapid rise in the rate of productivity increase per man-hour can be expected from now on.

2. In recent years it has proved impossible to increase demand fast enough to bring about the full use of either men or plant capacities. The task of developing sufficient additional demand promises to become more difficult each year. A thirty-billion-dollar annual increase in gross national product is now required to prevent unemployment rates from rising. An additional forty-to-sixty-billion-dollar increase would be required to bring unemployment rates down to an acceptable level.

3. The official rate of unemployment has remained at or above five and a half per cent during the Sixties. The unemployment rate for teenagers has been rising steadily and now stands around fifteen per cent. The unemployment rate for Negro teenagers stands about thirty per cent. The unemployment rate for teenagers in minority ghettos sometimes exceeds fifty per cent. Unemployment rates for Negroes are regularly more than twice those for whites, whatever their occupation, educational level, age or sex. The unemployment position for other racial minorities is similarly unfavorable. Unemployment rates in depressed areas often exceeds fifty per cent.

These official figures seriously underestimate the true extent of unemployment. The statistics take no notice of underemployment or featherbedding. Besides the five and a half per cent of the labor force who are officially designated as unemployed, nearly four per cent of the labor force sought full-time work in 1962 but could find only part-time jobs. In addition, methods of calculating unemployment rates—a person is counted as unemployed only if he has actively sought a job recently—ignore the fact that many men and women who would like to find jobs have not looked for them because they know there are no employment opportunities.

Underestimates for this reason are pervasive among groups whose unemployment rates are

high—the young, the old, and racial minorities. Many people in the depressed agricultural, mining, and industrial areas, who by official definition hold jobs but who are actually grossly under-employed, would move if there were prospects of finding work elsewhere. It is reasonable to estimate that over eight million people are not working who would like to have jobs today as compared with the four million shown in the official statistics.

Even more serious is the fact that the number of people who have voluntarily removed themselves from the labor force is not constant but increases continually. These people have decided to stop looking for employment and seem to have accepted the fact that they will never hold jobs again. This decision is largely irreversible, in economic and also in social and psychological terms. The older worker calls himself “retired”; he cannot accept work without affecting his social security status. The worker in his prime years is forced onto relief: In most states the requirements for becoming a relief recipient bring about such fundamental alterations in an individual's situation that a reversal of the process is always difficult and often totally infeasible. Teenagers, especially “drop-outs” and Negroes, are coming to realize that there is no place for them in the labor force but at the same time they are given no realistic alternative. These people and their dependents make up a large part of the “poverty” sector of the American population.

Statistical evidence of these trends appears in the decline in the proportion of people claiming to be in the labor force—the so-called labor force participation rate. The recent apparent stabilization of the unemployment rate around five and a half per cent is therefore misleading: it is a reflection of the discouragement and defeat of people who cannot find employment and have withdrawn from the market rather than a measure of the economy's success in creating jobs for those who want to work.

4. An efficiently functioning industrial system is assumed to provide the great majority of new jobs through the expansion of the private enterprise sector. But well over half of the new jobs created during 1957-1962 were in the public sector—predominantly in teaching. Job creation in the private sector has now almost entirely ceased except in services; of the four million three hundred thousand jobs created in this period, only about two hundred thousand were provided by private industry through its own efforts. Many authorities anticipate that the application of cybernation to certain service industries, which is only just beginning, will be particularly effective. If this is the case, no significant job creation will take place in the private sector in coming years.

5. Cybernation raises the level of the skills of the machine. Secretary of Labor Willard Wirtz has recently stated that the machines being produced today have, on the average, skills equivalent to a high school diploma. If a human being is to compete with such machines, therefore, he must at least possess a high school diploma. The Department of Labor estimates, however, that on the basis of present trends, as many as thirty per cent of all students will be high school drop-outs in this decade.

6. A permanently depressed class is developing in the US. Some thirty-eight million Americans, almost one-fifth of the nation, still live in poverty. The percentage of total income received by the poorest twenty per cent of the population was 4.9% in 1944 and 4.7% in 1963.

Secretary Wirtz recently summarized these trends. “The confluence of surging population and driving technology is splitting the American labor force into tens of millions of ‘have's’ and millions of ‘have-nots.’ In our economy of sixty-nine million jobs, those with wanted skills enjoy opportunity and earning power. But the others face a new and stark problem—exclusion on a permanent basis, both as producers and consumers, from economic life. This division of people

threatens to create a human slag heap. We cannot tolerate the development of a separate nation of the poor, the unskilled, the jobless, living within another nation of the well-off, the trained and the employed."

### Need for a New Consensus

The stubbornness and novelty of the situation that is conveyed by these statistics is now generally accepted. Ironically, it continues to be assumed that it is possible to devise measures which will reduce unemployment to a minimum and thus preserve the over-all viability of the present productive system. Some authorities have gone so far as to suggest that the pace of technological change should be slowed down "so as to allow the industrial productive system time to adapt."

We believe, on the contrary, that the industrial productive system is no longer viable. We assert that the only way to turn technological change to the benefit of the individual and the service of the general welfare is to accept the process and to utilize it rationally and humanely. The new science of political economy will be built on the encouragement and planned expansion of cybernation. The issues raised by cybernation are particularly amenable to intelligent policy-making: Cybernation itself provides the resources and tools that are needed to ensure minimum hardship during the transition process.

But major changes must be made in our attitudes and institutions in the foreseeable future. Today Americans are being swept along by three simultaneous revolutions while assuming they have them under control. In the absence of real understanding of any of these phenomena, especially of technology, we may be allowing an efficient and dehumanized community to emerge by default. Gaining control of our future requires the conscious formation of the society we wish to have. Cybernation at last forces us to answer the historic questions: What is man's role when he is not dependent upon his own activities for the material basis of his life? What should be the basis for distributing individual access to national resources? Are there other proper claims on goods and services besides a job? Because of cybernation, society no longer needs to impose repetitive and meaningless (because unnecessary) toil upon the individual. Society can now set the citizen free to make his own choice of occupation and vocation our accepted modes of "work." But in the absence of such a new consensus about cybernation, the nation cannot begin to take advantage of all that it promises for human betterment.

### Proposal for Action

As a first step to a new consensus it is essential to recognize that the traditional link between jobs and incomes is being broken. The economy of abundance can sustain all citizens in comfort and economic security whether or not they engage in what is commonly reckoned as work. Wealth produced by machines rather than by men is still wealth. We urge, therefore, that society, through its appropriate legal and governmental institutions, undertake an unqualified commitment to provide every individual

This undertaking we consider to be essential to the emerging economic, social and political order in this country. We regard it as the only policy by which the quarter of the nation now dispossessed and soon-to-be dispossessed by lack of employment can be brought within the abundant society. The unqualified right to an income would take the place of the patchwork of

welfare measures—from unemployment insurance to relief—designed to ensure that no citizen or resident of the U.S. actually starves.

We do not pretend to visualize all of the consequences of this change in our values. It is clear, however, that the distribution of abundance in a cybernated society must be based on criteria strikingly different from those of an economic system based on scarcity. In retrospect, the establishment of the right to an income will prove to have been only the first step in the reconstruction of the value system of our society brought on by the triple revolution.

The present system encourages activities which can lead to private profit and neglects those activities which can enhance the wealth and the quality of life of our society. Consequently, national policy has hitherto been aimed far more at the welfare of the productive process than at the welfare of people. The era of cybernation can reverse this emphasis. With public policy and research concentrated on people rather than processes we believe that many creative activities and interests commonly thought of as non-economic will absorb the time and the commitment of many of those no longer needed to produce goods and services.

Society as a whole must encourage new modes of constructive, rewarding and ennobling activity. Principal among these are activities such as teaching and learning that relate people to people rather than people to things. Education has never been primarily conducted for profit in our society; it represents the first and most obvious activity inviting the expansion of the public sector to meet the needs of this period of transition.

We are not able to predict the long-run patterns of human activity and commitment in a nation when fewer and fewer people are involved in production of goods and services, nor are we able to forecast the overall patterns of income distribution that will replace those of the past full employment system. However, these are not speculative and fanciful matters to be contemplated at leisure for a society that may come into existence in three or four generations. The outlines of the future press sharply into the present. The problems of joblessness, inadequate incomes, and frustrated lives confront us now; the American Negro, in his rebellion, asserts the demands—and the rights—of all the disadvantaged. The Negro's is the most insistent voice today, but behind him stand the millions of impoverished who are beginning to understand that cybernation, properly understood and used, is the road out of want and toward a decent life.

#### The Transition\*

[\*This view of the transitional period is not shared by all the signers. Robert Theobald and James Boggs hold that the two major principles of the transitional period will be (1) that machines rather than men will take up new conventional work openings and (2) that the activity of men will be directed to new forms of "work" and "leisure." Therefore, in their opinion, the specific proposals outlined in this section are more suitable for meeting the problems of the scarcity-economic system than for advancing through the period of transition into the period of abundance.]

We recognize that the drastic alternations in circumstances and in our way of life ushered in by cybernation and the economy of abundance will not be completed overnight. Left to the ordinary forces of the market such change, however, will involve physical and psychological misery and perhaps political chaos. Such misery is already clearly evident among the unemployed, among relief clients into the third generation and more and more among the young and the old for whom society appears to hold no promise of dignified or even stable lives. We must develop programs for this transition designed to give hope to the dispossessed and those cast

out by the economic system, and to provide a basis for the rallying of people to bring about those changes in political and social institutions which are essential to the age of technology.

The program here suggested is not intended to be inclusive but rather to indicate its necessary scope. We propose:

1. A massive program to build up our educational system, designed especially with the needs of the chronically under-educated in mind. We estimate that tens of thousands of employment opportunities in such areas as teaching and research and development, particularly for younger people, may be thus created. Federal programs looking to the training of an additional hundred thousand teachers annually are needed.

2. Massive public works. The need is to develop and put into effect programs of public works to construct dams, reservoirs, ports, water and air pollution facilities, community recreation facilities. We estimate that for each billion dollars per year spent on public works a hundred and fifty thousand to two hundred thousand jobs would be created. Two billion dollars or more a year should be spent in this way, preferably as matching funds aimed at the relief of economically distressed or dislocated areas.

3. A massive program of low-cost housing, to be built both publicly and privately, and aimed at a rate of seven hundred thousand to a million units a year.

4. Development and financing of rapid-transit systems, urban and interurban; and other programs to cope with the spreading problems of the great metropolitan centers.

5. A public power system built on the abundance of coal in distressed areas, designed for low-cost power to heavy industrial and residential sections.

6. Rehabilitation of obsolete military bases for community or educational use.

7. A major revision of our tax structure aimed at redistributing income as well as apportioning the costs of the transition period equitably. To this end an expansion of the use of excess profits tax would be important. Subsidies and tax credit plans are required to ease the human suffering involved in the transition of many industries from man power to machine power.

8. The trade unions can play an important and significant role in this period in a number of ways:

- a. Use of collective bargaining to negotiate not only for people at work but also for those thrown out of work by technological change.

- b. Bargaining for perquisites, such as housing, recreational facilities, and similar programs, as they have negotiated health and welfare programs.

- c. Obtaining a voice in the investment of the unions' huge pension and welfare funds, and insisting on investment policies which have as their major criteria the social use and function of the enterprise in which the investment is made.

- d. Organization of the unemployed so that these voiceless people may once more be given a voice in their own economic destinies, and strengthening of the campaigns to organize white-collar and professional workers.

9. The use of the licensing power of government to regulate the speed and direction of cybernation to minimize hardship; and the use of minimum wage power as well as taxing powers to provide the incentives for moving as rapidly as possible toward the goals indicated by this paper.

These suggestions are in no way intended to be complete or definitively formulated. They contemplate expenditures of several billions more each year than are now being spent for socially rewarding enterprises, and a larger role for the government in the economy than it has now or has

been given except in times of crisis. In our opinion, this is a time of crisis, the crisis of a triple revolution. Public philosophy for the transition must rest on the conviction that our economic, social and political institutions exist for the use of man and that man does not exist to maintain a particular economic system. This philosophy centers on an understanding that governments are instituted among men for the purpose of making possible life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness and that government should be a creative and positive instrument toward these ends.

### Change Must Be Managed

The historic discovery of the post-World War II years is that the economic destiny of the nation can be managed. Since the debate over the Employment Act of 1946, it has been increasingly understood that the federal government bears primary responsibility for the economic and social well-being of the country. The essence of management is planning. The democratic requirement is planning by public bodies for the general welfare. Planning by private bodies such as corporations for their own welfare does not automatically result in additions to the general welfare, as the impact of cybernation on jobs has already made clear.

The hardships imposed by sudden changes in technology have been acknowledged by Congress in proposals for dealing with the long and short-run “dislocations,” in legislation for depressed and “impacted” areas, retraining of workers replaced by machines, and the like. The measures so far proposed have not been “transitional” in conception. Perhaps for this reason they have had little effect on the situations they were designed to alleviate. But the primary weakness of this legislation is not ineffectiveness but incoherence. In no way can these disconnected measures be seen as a plan for remedying deep ailments but only, so to speak, as the superficial treatment of surface wounds.

Planning agencies should constitute the network through which pass the stated needs of the people at every level of society, gradually building into a national inventory of human requirements, arrived at by democratic debate of elected representatives.

The primary tasks of the appropriate planning institutions should be:

- \* To collect the data necessary to appraise the effects, social and economic, of cybernation at different rates of innovation.

- \* To recommend ways, by public and private initiative, of encouraging and stimulating cybernation.

- \* To work toward optimal allocations of human and natural resources in meeting the requirements of society.

- \* To develop ways to smooth the transition from a society in which the norm is full employment within an economic system based on scarcity, to one in which the norm will be either non-employment, in the traditional sense of productive work, or employment on the great variety of socially valuable but “non-productive” tasks made possible by an economy of abundance; to bring about the conditions in which men and women no longer needed to produce goods and services may find their way to a variety of self-fulfilling and socially useful occupations.

- \* To work out alternatives to defense and related spending that will commend themselves to citizens, entrepreneurs and workers as a more reasonable use of common resources.

- \* To integrate domestic and international planning. The technological revolution has related virtually every major domestic problem to a world problem. The vast inequities between the industrialized and the underdeveloped countries cannot long be sustained.

The aim throughout will be the conscious and rational direction of economic life by planning institutions under democratic control.

In this changed framework the new planning institutions will operate at every level of government—local, regional and federal—and will be organized to elicit democratic participation in all their proceedings. These bodies will be the means for giving direction and content to the growing demand for improvement in all departments of public life. The planning institutions will show the way to turn the growing protest against ugly cities, polluted air and water, an inadequate educational system, disappearing recreational and material resources, low levels of medical care, and the haphazard economic development into an integrated effort to raise the level of general welfare.

We are encouraged by the record of the planning institutions both of the Common Market and of several European nations and believe that this country can benefit from studying their weaknesses and strengths.

A principal result of planning will be to step up investment in the public sector. Greater investment in this area is advocated because it is overdue, because the needs in this sector comprise a substantial part of the content of the general welfare, and because they can be readily afforded by an abundant society. Given the knowledge that we are now in a period of transition it would be deceptive, in our opinion, to present such activities as likely to produce full employment. The efficiencies of cybernation should be as much sought in the public as in the private sector, and a chief focus of planning would be one means of bringing this about. A central assumption of planning institutions would be the central assumption of this statement, that the nation is moving into a society in which production of goods and services is not the only or perhaps the chief means of distributing income.

### The Democratization of Change

The revolution in weaponry gives some dim promise that mankind may finally eliminate institutionalized force as the method of settling international conflict and find for it political and moral equivalents leading to a better world. The Negro revolution signals the ultimate admission of this group to the American community on equal social, political and economic terms. The cybernation revolution proffers an existence qualitatively richer in democratic as well as material values. A social order in which men make the decisions that shape their lives becomes more possible now than ever before; the unshackling of men from the bonds of unfulfilling labor frees them to become citizens, to make themselves and to make their own history.

But these enhanced promises by no means constitute a guarantee. Illuminating and making more possible the “democratic vistas” is one thing; reaching them is quite another, for a vision of democratic life is made real not by technological change but by men consciously moving toward that ideal and creating institutions that will realize and nourish the vision in living form.

Democracy, as we use the term, means a community of men and women who are able to understand, express and determine their lives as dignified human beings. Democracy can only be rooted in a political and economic order in which wealth is distributed by and for people, and used for the widest social benefit. With the emergence of the era of abundance we have the economic base for a true democracy of participation, in which men no longer need to feel themselves prisoners of social forces and decisions beyond their control or comprehension.

Signed:

Donald G. Agger, Dr. Donald B. Armstrong, James Boggs, Lois Fein, W. H. Ferry, Maxwell Geismar, Todd Gitlin, Philip Green, Roger Hagan, Michael Harrington, Tom Hayden, Robert L. Heilbroner, Ralph L. Helstein, Frances W. Herring, Hugh B. Hester, Alice Mary Hilton, Irving Howe, Everett C. Hughes, H. Stuart Hughes, Gerald W. Johnson, Irving F. Laucks, Stewart Meacham, A. J. Muste, Gunnar Myrdal (with reservations), Linus Pauling, Gerard Piel, Michael D. Reagan, Bayard Rustin, Ben B. Seligman, Robert Theobald, John William Ward, William Worthy

*From: Liberation, April 1964, p9-15.*

*[Editors' note: "Triple Revolution" was sent to President Lyndon B. Johnson in March 1964, with an accompanying letter. The letter to the President, together with the Report, was also sent to the Majority and Minority leaders of the Senate and the House of Representatives and to the Secretary of Labor. The White House reply from Mr. Lee White, Assistant Special Counsel to the President, was received shortly thereafter. Both letters can be read at <http://www.pa.msu.edu/people/mulhall/mist/Triple.html>]*



**CHESTER, PA.—COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION IN THE OTHER AMERICA**

Distributed by Students for a Democratic Society

**Chester Report**

Submitted by the Swarthmore College chapter of SDS, in collaboration with the Committee for Freedom Now of Chester, Pennsylvania and the Swarthmore Political Action Club of Swarthmore College.

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November, 1963. 400 people block the doors to a school, refuse to let teachers or students enter. Parents of the school's children make up the demonstration line. 400 people march through the city's streets, singing. They march to the Mayor, to the Board of Education. No one listens to their plea for better schools. They sit in at city hall, blocking the building's main hall, stopping work for the day. Police arrest 258. These are the Negro citizens of Chester, Pennsylvania. They are fighting for better schools.

Chester, Pennsylvania poses some questions: What are the conditions of Chester? Can events there serve as an example for the rest of the North? How did the Chester movement come about? These three questions—the why, the importance, and the how of Chester—are vital to Students for a Democratic Society at this time of crisis in search for a new direction.

**I. What is Chester:**

A northern city, population 63,000—27,000 Negro. Except for two cities which are on the Federal Government's list of permanently depressed areas, it has the worst unemployment, the lowest median income, and the most thoroughly exploited tax base of any city its size in Pennsylvania. Government figures set white unemployment at 15%, Negro at 30%. Chester faces the usual urban problem of the ghetto, determined by low rent areas and plagued by poor housing conditions. Discrimination in hiring keeps Negroes from some jobs and leaves them only low pay work in industry, but an overall lack of job opportunities towers over the segregation problem. Chester is an industrial city, specializing in ship-building and oil refining; but industry is moving out. Ford left three year ago, leaving more than 1000 jobless.

Chester has the oldest intact Republican machine in the country. It has survived the labor movement and the post war reforms. Bribes and physical intimidation distort election results,

especially in the Negro wards. For all effective purposes, the Negro has no representation in the city government.

## II. How is Chester important to the North:

The problems of Chester are the problems of poverty. Discrimination dictates that poverty seeks out the Negro first. So long as the Negro population can absorb poverty, the white population does not have to bear the burden. If the community is 30% Negro and 30% indigent, not many whites are in the lowest strata. Only when indigency spreads, or when there is no Negro population large enough to take up the burden, does the white begin to feel the brunt of the poverty.

The distress of poverty appears in city after city throughout the north. Two major factors, the continued stagnation of the country and the increase in automation, are exacerbating poor conditions, and increasing the number of people affected. The Negro is hardest hit, “Last hired, first fired”, applies in the broadest sense. The Negro has been first to protest: he is most affected, and he has a clearer focus at which to aim his resentment than the other poor: discrimination is easy to see, and relatively easy to fight. But Chester stands for any northern city, white, black, or integrated. The whites too can organize around poverty. It is the thesis and the hope of this report that indigent America—the other America, white and black—can use the example and momentum of Negro protest to form a broader based movement.

What is Chester: an industrial city of the north, facing the rising specter of poverty.

How is it relevant: It can serve as an example and a first case study of the broader movement for social reform in America.

## III. How did Chester come about:

The rest of this report deals with the third major question—the how of Chester. It is a case study dealing with the history, techniques, and future of the movement in Chester, with the hope that Chester will be an example for the rest of the North.

How: the issue—Franklin School:

The conditions of Chester are northern conditions. The recent mobilization centers on these problems, and has taken a form unknown to the south. As an example, the initial issue in Chester concerned the poor conditions of the Franklin School, an elementary school in the middle of the ghetto. Although 95 % of the school children are Negro, it serves all of the surrounding community, and is not considered segregated. The parents are far more concerned about the poor conditions of the building. Built in 1910, it was intended to house 500 students. In September of this year, 1200 were enrolled. One desk and several piles of books served as the library. Two toilets had to suffice for the entire building. An unused coal bin formed the gym. The playground, a cement terrace with metal pilings embedded in it, drops four feet to the sidewalk along one edge, with no protective railing. More than 39 pupils are squeezed into each classroom, as opposed to an average of 26 in the nearest white school.

How: the history:

Several attempts have been made in Chester within the last three years to organize the Negro community. All have put stress on discrimination—in housing or in medical service or in hiring. None have gained widespread or continuing support.

In the fall of this year, Stanley Branche, a Negro resident of Chester, and several students from nearby Swarthmore College returned from a summer in Cambridge, MD. The movement in Cambridge had flared violently over the summer, and then dissipated because of too strong an opposition from the national guard, and more important, because of a growing realization that the movement had no where to turn. No one had the money to pay the bill in restaurants that might have been integrated. Cambridge did not have the industry to give jobs and money. Enthusiasm for civil rights demands had begun to dwindle, and a broader, but still vague view of the essential problems was beginning to take shape.

Mr. Branche and friends, with the aid of Swarthmore students, set out to find an issue that would have importance and appeal for the Negro community. Segregation was too limited and too obscured to have meaning for many. The poor conditions at the Franklin School were problems much more immediate. This group formed a loose organization, The Committee For Freedom Now of Chester, Pa. (CFFN).

A brief chronology of recent events in Chester:

1962 Parents' complaints about the poor conditions in Chester's schools had been brought to the attention of the Board of Education.

1963 Oct.

CFFN decided on the Franklin School as a problem of vital interest and concern to the Negro community.

Nov. 5-8

Picketing continued; the picket line grew. From 20 at the beginning of the week, the line swelled to 150 Wednesday.

Nov. 10

Monday evening: A mass meeting of the community was held at a local church. The Board of Education having sent no reply, CEFN decided to block the doors to the school the following morning and forbidding anyone to enter.

Nov. 11

Tuesday morning: The blockade closed the school. Four hundred people participated. When the closing was made official at 9:30 A.M., the demonstrators marched through the streets to the center of town. Arriving at City Hall, 150 entered the Mayor's chambers and presented their complaints to the commissioners. They were told that the letter never arrived, and that the Mayor and the Council had no control over the Board of Education.

Rebuked the demonstrators marched again through the town to the office of the Board of Education. The doors had been barred, but from the upper windows scared faces watched the crowd below. Mr. Branche was at length admitted to an hour long conference, but the Board refused to make any commitments or any promises. The crowd dispersed, planning to block the doors again the following day.

Nov. 12

Wednesday morning: The blockade was set up once again. As soon as enough people arrived at the school to insure the blocking of the doors, the rest were ferried across town to the Board of Education offices. There too the doors were blocked. The Board of Education did no work that day. From the Board's offices at the northern part of town, and from the school, in the western part, the demonstrators marched toward the municipal building. On the steps of the building they sang and

prayed, and then entered, sitting on counters, chairs, and floor, preventing the elevator from operating, stopping anyone from entering or leaving the building. For several hours, the policemen watched as demonstrators continued to pray, sing, and talk. The building's entire staff was given the rest of the day off. Those who were not afraid to walk through the crowd of demonstrators went home. Eventually paddy wagons were backed up to a side door. The demonstrators had locked arms. The police pulled them apart and dragged them down the stairs to the waiting vans. Three hours later 158 had been arrested. Another mass meeting was held at the church that night.

Nov. 13

At the school more members of the community blocked the school doors. Police arrested 82. The first day, prisoners were released on \$200 bail each.

At a mass meeting that evening, Stanley Branche announced that the Board of Education had given in to many of CFFN's demands. The Board promised to reduce the size of classes, provide better toilet facilities and said it "looked forward" to the construction of a new school.

Nov. – later

An executive committee organized during the days in prison began to give CFFN a formal structure. The committee formulated a broad list of long-range goals (see the Chester leaflet). The committee asked for more jobs, better housing, better schools, better medical care, and an end to discrimination.

Thanksgiving –

CFFN organized block groups in the Negro community, concentrated in the area immediately around the Franklin School. An awareness of the true nature of Chester's problems was seen as the goal of these organizations, an awareness to be achieved through active participation in the struggle for better conditions. The focal point so far has been housing conditions. The neighborhood groups have surveyed to determine the extent of bad conditions, petitioned landlords, and threatened to call a rent strike some time in the spring or early summer. Each neighborhood has appointed one representative to be on the executive committee of CFFN. It is expected that the network will expand from the present four groups into a city wide organization.

How: the program, definitional:

The next aspect of the How of Chester deals with the program—what basic premises lie behind the decisions, and what kind of considerations have gone into determining a course of action.

Decisions must be made about three major categories: goals, strategy, and tactics. Goals are the long-range hopes of the movement. Strategy makes up the general lines of action. Once strategy is successfully completed, the goals will have been achieved. Tactics constitute the specific projects undertaken in pursuing the line of strategy. In brief, tactics are implemented to effect strategy, which is conceived to bring about basic goals.

The Chester movement has two goals: To better the conditions of the city on an immediate and local level, and, whenever the first is not possible, to lay the groundwork for a national organization to effect broader change.

Strategy in Chester has been along four major lines. 1) To get the people in general to realize the true nature of the problems they face. 2) To create the will and the ability among the population at large to carry through well organized projects. 3) To find and train leaders who can direct tactical endeavors and who can meet to formulate strategy. These first three are organizational strategic objectives; the fourth finally gets down to business. 4) To initiate direct action endeavors to bring about the long term goals. This last objective, however, cannot be begun until the first three strategic aims have been at least partially gained. Most direct action to date has been of a tactical nature aimed at affecting the organizational strategic aims. The blockade of the schools and a proposed rent strike are to date the only direct action projects with any strategic value, but these were conceived mainly for organizational ends.

Three major tactics have been employed to date in Chester: the blockade of the school, the organization of neighborhood groups, and the formation of an executive committee. All three have been aimed to effect the first three steps in the strategy—awareness, organization ability, leadership training.

In addition, a myriad of minor tactical techniques have been developed. Door to door campaigning has proved absolutely essential in the organization of neighborhood projects. Even after the groups have been set up it is often necessary to make personal visits to assure adequate attendance at meetings. Mass meetings must precede any large scale action, and thorough leafleting is a prerequisite to every mass meeting.

How: the program, chronologically:

In a chronological context, the tactical steps necessary to affect the first three strategic points can be arranged thus: research, direct action, neighborhood organization, more direct action.

Research: The first steps that students in Chester made this fall involved a door to door survey of living conditions, asking about housing, jobs, salaries, church affiliations, family structure, complaints against the way of life. The survey gave the students a rough idea of the problems, and enabled them to obtain a knowledge of the geography and political structure of the town, as well as some insight into the employment situation.

At this stage, as well as at most other times in the course of the movement, detailed research was necessary into the political and economic history of the town, and also into immediate conditions.

Direct Action: The next step was a meeting with local leaders to determine the first projects. This occurred in September, at which point, it was decided to concentrate attention on the Franklin School. At this point direct action serves to focus attention, draw the community together, and provide it with a point of common experience—hopefully success—around which to rally future support. As a result of the Franklin episode, the residents spoke of going to jail with pride, the children sang freedom songs in the streets when they played, and, for the first time, the Negro in Chester has some small grain of hope.

Neighborhood organization: Hope is essential to create a deep-rooted movement. Block organizations, which have been the succeeding tactical step, are intended to instill hope and to achieve preliminary strategic objectives.

Conditions at the Franklin school have been bad for years. But now, as a result of the blockade and the block organizations, the community speaks of hope for change, which is two-fold: on the one hand, is a realization that the community has a right to better schools, more jobs, more say in government, on the other hand is the first feeling of hope that they have the power to achieve better conditions.

Block organization and the endeavors they undertake give many members of the community a chance to take an active part in the fight. Through participation they learn that action does not mean retribution—as it has always in the past—loss of jobs, loss of homes, increased police arbitrariness. They learn that working together they are strong.

More direct action: Through active participation the community begins to understand the true nature of the problems. CFFN has integrated the staff of every downtown store that hires more than two or three. For their pains, they have gained fifty to a hundred jobs—no gain at all compared to the pressing need. The community is coming to realize that fight along the lines of discrimination will never cure the problems.

These activities of the neighborhood groups form the fourth tactical step—activity to tighten the organization, spread it to other parts of town, and increase awareness. Eventually, it is hoped that the first three strategic steps have been sufficiently achieved so that direct action can concentrate toward making concrete changes in Chester—or at least toward finding out if such changes are possible on a local level.

This discussion of the tactical procedure for community organization in Chester is by no means complete. It is drawn from the experience of one northern community. Most of the tactics were developed on the spot in a trial and error fashion. Much experience is necessary to increase the store of tactics and the understanding of the problem. Tactical knowledge of “how” will only come as other communities are organized throughout the North.

How: the program, analytic:

This report has dealt with the program in Chester—its goals, strategy, and tactics in a definition and chronological manner. The third step in discussion is “how” to deal with strategy analytically. The definition of the goals, strategy, and tactics is clear, and so is their meaning in terms of the Chester situation. So too is their sequence. The reasoning that must be continued before future decisions can be made remains to be discussed.

The essence of the first three strategic aims—awareness, organizational ability among the community, and leadership development, is the elimination of fear—or the creation of hope. Hope rests on four things: having a direction to go in, having leadership to show the way, believing that the end can be reached, and having interest enough to reach it.

SDS is facing a directional crisis, so is Chester. Should Chester attempt to solve its problems internally? Is such a solution possible? Chester is becoming more and more certain that there is no local solution, but until SDS or someone else provides a national network with which it can hook up, it must continue to wage a local battle. Even on the possibly fruitless local level, which way should it turn? Can inroads be made best on housing, school, medicine, or jobs? An explanation of why housing and schools are being chosen appears below. These decisions, however, have been made empirically, and much research is necessary to find which areas form the best focal points, which are most likely to yield successes, which are most important to breaking the vicious circle of poverty?

Although Chester can make some further progress before these questions are answered, the question of local versus national solutions—and how and when national solutions are to be obtained, has direct bearing on CFFN leadership development, and therefore CFFN tactics. If the solution will be local then CFFN should cultivate grass roots understanding, and prepare for a long, slow campaign. If, on the other hand, the solution will be national, perhaps CFFN should concentrate on developing leaders who can lead the population in a relatively short time into dramatic action. Different tactics would be required for each course. If Chester has a rent strike,

in the near future, it might be necessary to bring it off without every participant fully understanding the issues involved. With good leadership, it might be possible. CFFN would set another example for the north. On the other hand, since such a battle does not necessarily do the most to arouse awareness, and might result in the local Chester movement getting quashed, such a tactic might be devastating for CFFN if it lacked outside support or interest.

Thus there are many questions which only an organization like SDS can answer before Chester can know which way it is to go, and before it is fully sure of how to give the community hope.

Hope comes with able leadership, and in this area too there are specific problems. Three hundred years of suppression have scared the Negro away from the active role. Leadership implies responsibility, and always in the past, leadership has received the blame and the retribution. The Negro must be shown that he need not lose his job or his home for taking a stand. Potential leadership in Chester has shied away from phoning or writing governmental authorities for fear of retribution. Few will sign their names to petitions for the same reasons. The lack of leadership opportunity and training, and the lack of time away from home-keeping and work represent other barriers to developing a sound leadership. Block organizations and the executive committee, however, are beginning to solve the problem.

Creating a widespread belief that something can be done is an obvious necessity for continued interest. But such a belief rests at least in part upon past successes. The Negro community of Chester speaks of the Franklin School episode as a battle won. The victory serves as a rallying point for future organization. Issues that give easy victories, however, are not likely to be those involving basic, deep-seated problems.

In talking of possible issues for the Chester movement, there are four distinctive types of endeavors, positive dinky, positive community, negative community, and negative national. Dinky, as opposed to community or national, distinguishes those projects which do not deal with major problems, and are conceived only to give the participants organizational practice, and are not conceived to benefit the community. Positive implies that the problem tackled is not a basic one, and therefore apt to yield success. Negative type projects attack fundamental weaknesses in the system, and because of the strength necessary to produce change are apt to run the participants into a figurative stone wall. In so doing, they may learn of the deep nature of the problems that face them, but morale will not be helped.

It is clear that creating the belief of the possibility of success depends in part on positive projects. Positive community projects, however, cannot be undertaken without organizational skill, which must be created with endeavors of the positive dinky variety. On the other hand, neither positive variety does much to show the community the true nature of the issues. Obviously, a balance must be struck between "positive" and "negative" projects. Where the fulcrum lies is not clear, and will vary from community to community.

The final prerequisite of hope is continued interest. Interest is affected partly by the presence of successes (see above), and partly by the relevance of the issues to the needs of the population. Several possible focal points in Chester are discussed below as examples:

Medicine: Poor medical treatment is evident only to a certain small percentage of the population at any given time. Hospitals are often removed from the neighborhood of the indigent community, and do not provide an adequate physical focus for mass activity. The connection between poor medical care and the broader economic problems is not easy to make clear.

Jobs: Although the need for jobs is the fundamental need of the indigent community, it does not readily form a focal point for direct or educational action. Except for one industry locales (see

discussion under Future) any factory would not affect many people in a small area. Again, the factory is not apt to be a strategically located focal point.

Aside from tactical problems, however, as attack on employment at this time in most Negro communities could be a serious strategic mistake. The Civil Rights movement has forced the Negro to think of job difficulties in terms of segregation and discrimination. He is accustomed to blaming the color of his skin. It could be difficult, although not impossible, to see that other employment demands must be for full rather than fair hiring. In Chester, even after the non-racial Franklin Scholl controversy, CFFN made demands for fair hiring in retail stores and in industry. None so far have been made for full employment.

Much more important, however, are the possible misinterpretation of any Negro employment demands by the white community. Whites feel that any demands from the Negro are for fair employment, and, given the limited supply of jobs, feel that these demands are a threat to the white. Even if the Negro community demonstrates for full employment, they may not easily heed the call to “come and read our picket signs—we’re on your side.”

The Negro is fast realizing that his problems are more than racial. More slowly he is seeing that he cannot solve them alone. Any action which might alienate his potential allies—whites who are now or who may soon be in his same, indigent position, must be avoided at all costs.

Even though direct action on jobs seems difficult at present, jobs form the core of discussions within CFFN, and awareness of the problem is growing.

School: Franklin School shows clearly that education can form a good focal point for community action. Many are affected and organization is simplified by the central location of schools and the sure communication line of children to parents.

Housing: Housing has formed the most valuable focus for action in Chester. The ghetto and the poor economic conditions produce large areas of high density poor conditions. Although concentration along this line is perhaps a longer route to facing the basic problem of the city, housing projects give large numbers a chance to participate. Especially in government assisted housing, the tenants have to face the city’s problems. In Chester, housing projects’ tenants will soon have to ask themselves if the city can afford to give them the same housing at lower, more reasonable rates. Then too, housing is a “positive” type demand, assuring some success and tending to sustain interest.

To achieve the first strategic points, hope is the fundamental prerequisite. Definite direction, adequate leadership, belief in success, and sustained interest are essential to maintaining hope.

It is hoped that this section of the report has conveyed some idea of the how of Chester—the history, the techniques and their how, why, and when. Having considered the conditions of Chester, its importance as an example for the rest of the north, and the manner in which it has come about, the final section of the report turns to consider the future of Chester and the future of the northern movement.

#### IV. The Future:

Chester, as the first example of the northern movement, has taken some of the form, but little of the content of the southern struggle. It is fitting some of the old tactics to new, broader goals. Chester’s future involves solidifying the long range goals, and developing new tactics to fit its new objectives. Although it may use the momentum of the civil rights struggle to provide example and incentive, it will have to reverse some of the trends of the southern campaign. In the north, the Negro must not learn to think and act as black, but as poor, his problem is as those of an indigent minority, not a racial one.



Chester must wait for other cities; or Chester may have fought in vain. Empirical evidence in Chester, and research on the U.S. economy is the large point to broad based structural weaknesses which cannot be solved locally.

Certain problems confront the organization of white communities. They do not have the momentum of the Civil Rights movement to spur them on. They are, perhaps, partially alienated from protest movements in general, due to the events in the south during the past few years. In addition, poverty is not ghettoized in white America to the degree it occurs in the Negro community. Instead of existing in close packed slums, white poverty is apt to be more thinly spread over a larger area (with the possible exception of the few largest cities).

On the other hand, none of these barriers are insurmountable, and economic trends in the U.S. appear to be creating the need for organization. Continued stagnation of unemployment and the growth of automation are increasing poverty, and more and more poverty is overflowing into white America. The closing of large, industrial plants (often due to changes in defense contracts—Long Island, Schnectady, San Diego in recent months) is creating pockets of unemployment; as is the elimination of the need for certain goods (the coal problem of the Appalachian region, Hazard, etc.). It is often said that prejudice is most severe between the lowest class whites and Negroes, ignoring the fact that such antagonism is frequently between employed whites and job-threatening Negroes. When whites find themselves fighting the same employment battle as Negroes which will happen if the economy continues to falter, and if he finds that he and the Negro have a common hope to look up to, it is not impossible that he will be less inclined to look down upon his black co-sufferers.

Chester must wait for other cities. Conditions and experience suggests that these other cities can be organized. Many of the experiences in Chester can be examples to other places. White communities are facing many of the same problems under many similar conditions. Possible organizing techniques for other northern cities: 1) the same local problem technique used with the Franklin School in Chester are applicable to white or Negro locales. 2) spreading housing or job protest from Negro sections into neighboring white communities—as in the New York rent strike at present. 3) organizing through militant labor unions—the Teamsters and the mine workers locals in Kentucky are current examples. 4) concentrating organization on areas of lightning unemployment produced by the closing of large scale industry, such as is occurring in Long Island over the New Year's holiday.

To steal a phrase: What is to be done?

- 1) Set up organizations in other indigent communities, white or colored, using Chester as an example where applicable.
- 2) Set up a national organization to coordinate the northern movement and deploy available manpower most expediently.
- 3) Develop concrete goals, consistent strategy, and effective tactics for the rising northern movement.

*[Editors' Note: The Memo to Freedom School teachers, May 20, 1964 (SNCC, Reel 67, File 340, Page 1189) announces a case study on the Chester, PA., movement, written by SDS. There are at least four papers on Chester in the SDS papers, all written by members of the Swarthmore College SDS chapter. We have chosen this paper as the most informative and most likely used for the Freedom School Curriculum.]*

## **GUIDE TO NEGRO HISTORY**

This outline for the Negro History section of the Freedom Schools curriculum has three mayor parts. The units are made on a basis of content, not of what we think is a day's or a week's class work. Also included is an introductory study on the Amistad Mutiny, as a sample of what can be done. The Amistad unit is divided into individual lessons.

### **Introduction: The Amistad Case**

Proposed as a sample introductory unit.

I. Brief Synopsis of the Amistad Incident: The AMISTAD is the name of a slave ship on which the slaves revolted in 1839. (Ironically, "Amistad" means "friendship" in Spanish.) Joseph Cinques (pronounced French, i.e. "sank"), the son of a Sierra Leone chief, was one of 53 Africans captured and taken to Havana, Cuba, where the ship picked up additional cargo and two Cuban planters. On the passage between Cuba and New York, Cinques exhorted his fellow slaves to break their chains and gain their freedom. The slaves were able to take over the ship and kill the pilot and captain, but they realized they must save someone to sail the ship back to Africa. With sugar cane knives at their backs, the two Cuban planters were directed to sail the Africans home.

By day the planters sailed the ship toward Africa, but by night they sailed toward New York. With this zig-zag course, they managed to land at a New York harbor, whereupon the duped slaves were again taken captive. A New York Judge heard the case of the slaves and decreed that they be returned to their homes, but the President of the United States, Martin Van Buren, disturbed that this decision might encourage additional slave revolts, requested the Attorney General of the United States to appeal the case to the Supreme Court.

While awaiting the trial, many New England abolitionists organized the American Missionary Society, in order to raise funds for the slaves' eventual return to Africa.

Also, an ex-President of the United States, John Quincy Adams, then 73 years old, and with a full career behind him, came forth to argue the case before the Supreme Court in behalf of the slaves, Adams argued eloquently for nearly five hours, and gained freedom for the slaves. He states in his diary that this was the most important act of his life.

In the meantime, the American Missionary Society was able to procure a vast amount of money, part of which enabled the slaves to return home. Prior to leaving the United States, Cinques and several of the slaves toured the country for the anti-slavery cause. When Cinques arrived home, he found his entire family and tribe had been enslaved, but after a few years he was made an African chief of another tribe.

The American Missionary Society used the remainder of its funds to found several Negro colleges, such as Hampton Institute, Berea College, and, after the Civil War, Tougaloo College.

II. Purpose of the Unit: The Amistad Society argues that this story, so lost in the mainstream of history (along with most important aspects of the history of the Negro), would most adequately set the tone for the Freedom School curriculum. Within this story can be found most of the major issues to be included in the subsequent curriculum. Our experience with teaching Negro history to high school students is that they show an immediate interest and delight in the Amistad incident. The students not only remember the story, but are able to recall many of its aspects when they are reflected in a further study of Negro history. We therefore, submit that the Amistad outline could serve the following purposes:

1. to elicit immediate interest on the part of Negro youth to a summer of study,
2. to set a tone of pride in their heritage,
3. to offer an introductory or orientation study with several themes which will allow for obvious relationships and parallels to be made in subsequent studies.

This study is flexible, so that it will be suitable for both day and residential schools. It can be used as a three-session day school study, or a three-day to one-week study in the residential schools. We have provided a bibliography both for teachers and students, so that reading skills are included.

### III. Outline: First recount the incident informally

A. African background: The study of African culture and politics before the coming of the white man, to place Cinques and the slaves in their home setting from which they were removed and placed into slavery. Example: Cinques was the son of an African chief and expressed the pride of a "son of Africa." During this first session, depending on the time allowed, one can discuss with the students some of the Great African empires such as Ghana, Mali and Songhay, the African universities, the politics of these African states and the important African inventions, such as the smelting of iron; or they can simply discuss the organization of African life before its complete destruction by the slave trade.

Suggested books: for teachers

Immanuel Wallerstein, Africa, the Politics of Independence (paperback), chapter 1.

Basil Davidson, Black Mother.

Lerone Bennett, Before the Mayflower, chapter 1.

for students:

Emma G. Sterne, The Long Black Schooner

John A. Williams, Africa: Her History, Lands and People (Cooper Square, paperback)

B. Slave Trade: Description of the slave ships and the manner in which the slaves were packed into the hold of the ship. The route of the slave ships would illustrate the economic basis of slavery, as well as the various nations involved in the trade. Example: the Amistad slave ship and the Cuban planters.

Suggested books: for teachers

Bennet, Before the Mayflower, chapter on the slave trade.

John Hope Franklin, From Slavery to Freedom, chapter on slave trade.

C. Slave Revolts: Illustrates the many revolts occurring even before the slaves arrived on American shores. Further instruction could include a description of the utter despair on the part of the slaves, as witnessed by cases where Africans jumped overboard in order to escape a life of servitude. Slave revolts on board the ships can be recalled during a study of insurrections in America, e.g., Nat Turner, Denmark Vesey, etc. The underground railroad and Harriet Tubman, even John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry might be included in a discussion of revolts. One could include here a general discussion of slavery, if time allows, and use Frederick Douglass as a guide. All of these things can be mentioned and discussed so that when the same issues come up

later, they can be recalled. It is most important that the students understand that protest is nothing new for Negroes and this study clearly illustrates that point.

Suggested books: for teachers

Herbert Aptheker, Documentary History of the Negro in America (several documents written by Negro insurrectionists).

Aptheker, Slave Revolts Chapters in both Bennett and Franklin books listed above.

Life and Times of Frederick Douglass, autobiography.

for students:

Ann Petry, Harriet Tubman, etc.

Katherine Scherman, The Slave who Freed Haiti

Dorothy Sterling, Freedom Train: The Story of Harriet Tubman

Arna W. Bontemps, The Story of George Washington Carver

D. Abolitionism: The founding of the American Missionary Society lends itself to a discussion of the many persons both white and Negro, who devoted their lives to abolishing slavery. This might include a discussion of men such as Wendell Phillips and Lloyd Garrison, as well as Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth. One should also include Elijah Lovejoy of Illinois, who was killed because of an abolitionist newspaper.

Suggested books: for teachers:

Chapters from both Bennett and Franklin.

Documents from Aptheker's Documentary History.

for students:

Arna Bontemps, Frederick Douglass, Slave-Fighter-Freedman.

Excellent film available on Frederick Douglass: House on Cedar Hill.

E. The Case in the Courts: One should introduce this discussion with a contrast of the United States Presidents involved and their attitudes toward humanity, i.e., Martin Van Buren, who opposed freedom for the slaves, and John Quincy Adams, who secured their freedom. This of course, allows for much reflection later in the curriculum on the present freedom struggle and the President's role. The case was first heard in a lower court of New York, and was appealed by the Attorney General of the United States to the highest court of the land. One can discuss here the manner in which cases are brought through our court system.

Suggested books: for teachers:

Aptheker's Documentary History of the Negro in America includes documents which span most of the aspects of this case and excerpts of these documents can be duplicated for distribution to the students.

for students:

Russell Adams, Great Negroes Past and Present (Chicago: Afro-American Publishing Co., 1963) offers a brief summary of the incident and a picture of Cinques.

### Part I: Origins of Prejudice (1600-1800)

What is the origin of prejudice? (Why do so many white men hate me? How did it all begin?)

Many things are unclear about the origins of slavery, but one thing is clear: slavery came before prejudice not prejudice before slavery. Prejudice came into being as a rationalization and justification for the institution of slavery. The origin of slavery was profit, not prejudice.

Illustration: Shakespeare wrote *Othello* about the time Jamestown, Virginia, was settled.

Although *Othello* contains some derogatory remarks about blackness, its plot—the marriage of a black man and a white woman—would have been inconceivable in a fundamentally prejudiced society.

Why was the Negro enslaved? Why not the Indian and the European? Briefly, the answer is that the Indians were exterminated, and Europeans had to be treated with moderation so that more Europeans would decide to come. Negro slavery in the New World centered in those areas where Indians were few and soon wiped out: North America and the West Indies. More than half of the white population of the Middle and Southern colonies came to America in some form of bondage (as convicts; as indentured servants, persons who served a term of years in return for their passage; or as the victims of kidnapping). But it was expedient for American employers to treat these white servants with moderation, so that their letters home would induce more Europeans to come.

Africans were first brought to the New World by the Spanish and Portuguese. This was about 100 years before the first Africans came to Jamestown, Virginia in 1619. By the time the English started colonies in the New World, there were already about 1,000,000 Negro slaves in the Spanish and Portuguese colonies of Central and South America.

It is true that there was a form of “slavery” in Africa before the coming of the European but it was far different from the chattel slavery (in which a human being is treated as property) that came into being in the New World. The African “slave” was a captive in war. He was not the basis of the African labor system as he was the basis of production in the New World south of the Potomac River. The African “slave” could gain his freedom without great difficulty, and socially was treated as a member of the household of the “master.”

On the other hand, it is true that many African chieftains cooperated with the Europeans in enslaving their countrymen. This was the first “black bourgeoisie.”

During the four centuries of the slave trade perhaps 100,000,000 Africans were brought to the New World. Probably something like one-third of those seized in African villages perished before reaching the Americas.

The legal status of slavery did not exist in America until the 1660's and 1670's. Before then Afro-Americans are described as ‘servants’ in the legal records of Maryland and Virginia. Yet even in this early period, Negro servants were often punished more severely than white servants: if a white servant ran away he might be required to serve a few more years, but if a Negro servant ran away he might be required to serve the rest of his life. As in so many periods of Southern history, law and custom were two different things, so it is difficult to know just when Negroes began to be treated as servants for life, i.e., slaves. It was the low price of tobacco after 1660, forcing planters to seek out the most economical method of production, which led to the spread of slavery in the South. At the same time the Royal African Company was formed in England to supply slaves to the New World. The king of England was a stockholder.

**The American Revolution**

Why didn't the American Revolution put an end to slavery? How is it that the men who wrote "all men are created equal" in the Declaration of Independence could continue to be slaveholders? (Examples: Jefferson, Washington)

It is worth emphasizing that the Revolution made some progress toward ending slavery. All the Northern States began the process of abolition by state legislation. From 1774 to 1776 the Continental Congress forbade the importation of slaves. In 1779 the Congress voted to arm slaves in South Carolina and Georgia to fight the British, but the legislatures of those states refused. In 1784, a motion by Jefferson to ban slavery west of the Appalachian mountains failed in Congress by one vote.

Nevertheless, the leaders of the Revolution never seriously attempted to end slavery. Three reasons seem most important: 1) Slaves were property, and as merchants, lawyers, and plantation owners, the Founding Fathers hesitated to attack any form of private property; 2) Not one of the Fathers was able to imagine an America in which white and black would live together as brothers and citizens (Jefferson, like Lincoln, thought that Negroes had the right to be free, but that they would have to be colonized.) 3) South Carolina and Georgia were inflexibly determined to retain slavery as the basis of rice (not yet cotton) production, and to have abolished slavery would have meant to start the Union without these two states.

**The United States Constitution**

The Constitution compromised with slavery. Although the word "slave" does not appear in the Constitution, the following clauses were written into the Constitution to protect slavery:

Article I, Section 2. Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several states according to the whole number of free persons plus three-fifths of all other persons. ("All other persons" meant Negro slaves. This clause gave Southern whites added strength in Congress.)

Article I, Section 9. The importation of such persons as the states think proper to admit shall not be prohibited by Congress for twenty years. (This clause enabled South Carolina and Georgia to import large numbers of slaves.)

Article IV, Section 2. No person held in service in one state who escapes into another shall be freed, but shall rather be delivered up to the party to whom such service is due. (This was the fugitive slave clause, which required the Northern states to assist in returning escaped slaves.)

Article IV, Section 4. The United States shall protect each of the states against domestic violence. (This was to keep down slave uprisings.)

This patchwork performance of America's Founding Fathers on the issue of slavery stands in sharp contrast with the record of the Latin American liberators, such as L'Ouverture, Bolivar and San Martin. All abolished slavery in their respective regions and looked forward eagerly to the day when black, white and brown would be mingled together in a united American people.

**Part II: Negro Resistance to Oppression**

How were the slaves freed? (Was freedom a gift from the white man? Or did Negroes help to win their own freedom?)

The first slave revolt in the Americas took place shortly after the Spanish brought the first slaves to this hemisphere (first slaves imported directly from West Africa: 1518; first slave revolt: Haiti, 1522).

### **The Haitian Revolution**

The greatest slave revolt in the history of the Western hemisphere was in Haiti (1791-1804).

In the French colony of Haiti, there were in 1789, 39,000 whites and 452,000 slaves. When the island had first been discovered by Europeans there were from one to three million Indians on it. Forty-three years later there were 500. Hence, Negro labor was imported from Africa.

The island was the gem of France's colonial empire. Two-thirds of all French foreign trade was with Haiti. 1000 vessels and 80,000 sailors were required to handle the annual trade between the mother country and the island.

In 1789, two-thirds of the slaves in Haiti were African-born. They kept alive the African religion and language. They themselves had a hard time staying alive. One slave in nine died every year. The French practiced such punishments as filling a rebellious slave's anus with gunpowder and igniting it.

Among the slaves was Toussaint L'Ouverture. He was a baptized Catholic. His father had received an education from the Jesuits, and Toussaint could read French. As a house slave he had a far easier lot than the field slaves. He was small in stature, five feet two inches. One of his favorite sayings was "doucement aller loin" which might be freely translated as "take it easy, but take it." His achievement is suggested by the fact that whereas Frederick Douglass was about 30 when he escaped to freedom, and Booker Washington was about 17 when emancipation came, Toussaint was 47 when the Haitian Revolution began.

The Haitian Revolution was inspired by the French Revolution of 1789. In August 1791, the slaves of Haiti rose. In two months they burned 1020 sugar, coffee, cotton and indigo plantations: the island was covered by a pall of smoke. In 1793, the government of France, then in its most radical (Jacobin) phase, abolished slavery throughout the French empire. Ten thousand refugees fled from Haiti to the United States.

England then invaded Haiti. From 1793 to 1798, England tried to defeat Toussaint, and failed.

Then Napoleon came to power in France, reinstated slavery, and sent his brother-in-law Leclerc to defeat Toussaint. All the "civilized" world assisted: England and Spain sent supplies, Spain and Holland provided ships. On one occasion when the French soldiers besieged the Haitian army in a fortress, they heard the Negro revolutionaries singing. It was the "Marseillaise."

In 1802, the French generals tricked Toussaint to come on board a French ship, treacherously seized him, and shipped him to France. There he died in a dungeon in the Alps in 1803. Meantime, however, the French army gave up its attempt to conquer Haiti. The Haitian revolution had defeated the two most powerful armies in the world. In 1804, the Republic of Haiti was declared.

Slave revolts were fewer and less serious in the United States than in many other parts of the New World. There were two reasons for this:

1) in the United States, it was possible to flee to the North, and men like Frederick Douglass did so who undoubtedly would have led insurrections had they stayed South;

2) in Haiti or Jamaica where slaves outnumbered whites eight or nine to one, insurrection was practical, but in the United States, it was not.

Nevertheless there were three major slave revolts in the United States in the period between the end of the American Revolution and the close of the revolutionary period elsewhere in the hemisphere. These were the Virginia revolts of Gabriel (1800) and Nat Turner (1831), and the insurrection planned by Denmark Vesey of Charleston, South Carolina (1822). And when one considers also that the slaves who fled North—perhaps 1,000 a year—took their lives in their hands, it is apparent that the picture of the plantation slave as a contented and childlike “Sambo” was far from the truth.

### **What Slavery Was Like**

Perhaps the simplest way to understand what slavery was like is to read the accounts of slaves who survived to tell about it: Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Booker T. Washington. All three lived in the Upper South (Maryland and Virginia). In the Deep South conditions were worse.

They were always hungry. On the plantation where Douglass grew up, the children were often fed scraps in a trough. Frederick recalled fighting with the dog for food. Booker Washington never remembered his family sitting down to dinner together before emancipation. Harriet Tubman was once nearly killed for stealing a lump of sugar.

Clothing was scanty. Children wore a one piece garment, a long shirt. It was made of so rough a material, Washington recalled, that it was torture to “break in” a new shirt.

Booker Washington never slept in a bed until emancipation. Douglass often slept with his head in a sack to keep out the cold, his feet sometimes splitting from frost. Harriet Tubman sometimes slept with her feet in the ashes of the fire.

Douglass saw his Aunt Esther get forty lashes. He saw a cousin walk onto his plantation from a plantation twelve miles distant, covered with blood from a beating; she was ordered to go back home. Harriet Tubman was hit in the head by a piece of iron thrown by an overseer, and suffered from dizzy spells for the rest of her life.

It is easy to understand why these leaders, in their different ways, struck out for freedom.

Negroes and whites worked together in the abolitionist movement. Negroes and whites joined in John Brown’s raid, Negro and white soldiers fought for freedom in the Civil War. The Negroes were usually more militant. David Walker in 1829, Henry High Garnett in 1843, Frederick Douglass in 1849 called for slave insurrection. President Abraham Lincoln said that without the help of 150,000 Negro soldiers, the North could not have won the Civil War.

Here are some important dates for this period:

- 1817 Birth of Frederick Douglass
- 1820 Birth of Harriet Tubman
- 1822 Vesey plot
- 1829 David Walker’s Appeal calls for slave insurrection
- 1831 William Lloyd Garrison founds The Liberator
- Nat Turner’s revolt
- 1838 Douglass escapes from slavery
- 1841 Douglass’ first public speech
- Thoreau refuses to pay Massachusetts poll tax



1847 Douglass founds North Star and meets John Brown  
1849 Harriet Tubman escaped  
1850 Fugitive Slave Law passed  
1859 John Brown's Raid

### Part III: Reconstruction (1865-1877) and the Beginning of Segregation

Why did Reconstruction fail? If we had the vote once, why don't we have it now? Why do we have to start all over again?

Reconstruction was the period just after the Civil War (1865-1877) when Northern troops were sent into the South to compel the Southern states to give real freedom to the freed slaves. During this period about 75 per cent of the Negroes of voting age in the Southern states were registered to vote. Today only about 30 per cent of the Negroes of voting age in the Southern states are registered (1,500,000 registered Negroes out of 5,000,000 eligible). The highest percentage of registered Negroes to Negroes of voting age in any Southern State today is 45.7%(Tennessee), the lowest percentage in any state is 5.3% (Mississippi). Thus in no Southern state today is the percentage of registered Negro voters as high as it was in the South during Reconstruction.

In the Southern state legislatures during the Reconstruction period, freed slaves (who were called 'freedmen' then), cooperated with Southern poor whites (who were called 'scalawags') and sympathizers from the North (who were called 'carpetbaggers'). The history books have caricatured the achievement of the Reconstruction legislatures. They started public school systems for Negroes and whites throughout the South; in the city of New Orleans the schools were fully integrated. They abolished imprisonment for debt, and attempted (but failed) to divide up the plantations of high-ranking Confederates among the poor.

Because of their great voting strength, Southern Negroes during Reconstruction elected many Negroes to office and obtained many public appointments. This was especially the case in South Carolina, Louisiana, and Mississippi, where at the time Negroes constituted a majority of the population.

Between 1869 and 1880, 16 Negroes were elected to the House of Representatives from Southern states. Six were from South Carolina, three from Alabama. During the same period two Negro Senators were elected, both from the state of Mississippi: Hiram Revels and Blanche Bruce.

In five states during Reconstruction there was a Negro superintendent of education: Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Florida, South Carolina.

In South Carolina, there was a decided Negro majority in the state legislature for instance, in 1873 there were 94 Negro members of the lower house and only 30 whites. In the same state, there were at various times during Reconstruction two Negro speakers of the lower house of the state legislature, two Negro lieutenant governors, a Negro secretary of state a Negro state treasurer, and a Negro member of the State Supreme Court.

In Mississippi, the counties of Bolivar, Warren, Hinds, Washington, Monroe and seven others had Negro sheriffs. There was a Negro mayor of Natchez, and a Negro member of the city council in Jackson. In 1873, the Lieutenant governor, the secretary of state, and the superintendent of education in the state of Mississippi were all Negroes. In 1873 there were fifty-three Negro members of the lower house of the Mississippi legislature.

Reconstruction failed because: (1) the freed Negro could not obtain ownership of land; (2) the Federal government lost interest—Federal troops were withdrawn from the South, and the Supreme Court refused to enforce the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments.

From 1865 (when the Civil War ended) to 1877 (when the last Northern troops were withdrawn from the defeated South), three amendments were added to the United States Constitution designed to free the Negro slave and to protect him in his freedom. These were:

Amendment XIII. Abolished slavery. (The Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863, freed only slaves within the Confederacy.)

Amendment XIV. Stated that all persons born in the United States were citizens of the United States. (The Supreme Court in the Dred Scott decision of 1857 had said that no Negro could be a citizen.) Further asserted that no state could deprive a United States citizen of his rights by passing or enforcing a State law contrary to those rights; “nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.”

Amendment XV. Created universal manhood suffrage.

Until 1877, these new amendments were supported by a number of Federal laws, notably the Reconstruction Act, which required Southern states to include universal manhood suffrage in their state constitutions; the Force Act, which made it a crime punishable by fine (not less than \$500) or imprisonment (not less than six months) to obstruct the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments; and the Civil Rights Act, which made it a crime to deny any person full enjoyment of all public facilities.

From 1877 to 1954, the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments were not supported by the Supreme Court and so not enforced. The key Court decisions were the Civil Rights Cases (1883), in which the Court held that the Federal Government was bound only to protect civil (not social) rights; Plessy vs. Ferguson (1896), in which the court upheld the segregation of transportation and announced the "separate but equal" doctrine; and Williams vs. Mississippi (1898) in which the court upheld state laws restricting the right to vote.

### **Myths about Reconstruction**

Reconstruction is the most distorted period in the writing of American history. Some of the myths about Reconstruction concern Representative Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania and Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts, the two men in Congress primarily responsible for its Reconstruction policy.

These men are generally portrayed as vengeful fanatics. But they were reacting to the policy of President Andrew Johnson, Lincoln's successor, which sought to leave the South in the hands of the same upper class that started the Civil War. Under the so-called "Presidential Reconstruction" of 1865, former Confederate states elected representatives to Congress which included the vice president of the Confederacy, six members of the Confederate cabinet, and four Confederate generals. No wonder Stevens and Sumner protested the seating of these men in Congress!

Moreover, the state governments erected in the South during 1865 passed laws known as "Black Codes" which (generally speaking) forbade Negroes to carry weapons, to meet with whites or intermarry with them, to own land, and to leave their employers. One observer reported: "Wherever I go—the street, the shop, the house, the hotel, or the steamboat—I hear the people

talk in such a way as to indicate that they are yet unable to conceive of the Negro as possessing any rights at all. To kill a Negro they do not deem murder; to debauch a Negro woman they do not deem fornication; to take property from a Negro they do not consider robbery. The people boast that when they get freedmen's affairs in their own hands, to use their own expression, 'the niggers will catch hell'." Carl Schurz concluded his report by stating: "Although the freedman is no longer considered the property of the individual master, he is considered the slave of society." No wonder Stevens and Sumner concluded that they should keep Federal troops in the South!

The Reconstruction plan developed by Stevens and Sumner in 1866–1867 had four aspects: 1) Passage of Congressional legislation to protect the freedman's civil rights; 2) Requirement that Southern states draw up new constitutions including manhood suffrage 3) Stationing troops in the South to protect the Negro in voting and exercising his rights; 4) Dividing the plantations to give the freedman economic as well as political independence. Today we are still struggling to fulfill this program. During Reconstruction all of it was achieved except point four. This bitterly disappointed Stevens, who said: "The whole fabric of Southern society must be changed. The Southern States have been despotisms, not governments of the people. It is impossible that any practical equality of rights can exist where a few thousand men monopolize the whole landed property."

Stevens died in 1868. He asked to be buried in the Negro graveyard in Lancaster, Pennsylvania because "finding other cemeteries limited by charter rules as to race, I have chosen this that I might illustrate in death the principles which I have advocated through a long life, Equality of man before his Creator."

Five years later Sumner, too, was dead. He died as he strove to push through Congress a bill making it a crime to discriminate in hotels, railroads, theaters, restaurants, and other public accommodations. His last words were: "The civil rights bill, the civil rights bill."

Other myths about Reconstruction concern what happened in the South. Among these are:

1. For ten years the South was overrun by Federal troops. (There were never more than 20,000. Richmond and New Orleans had the largest garrisons, about 1,000 soldiers each.)
2. Everywhere the old plantation owners were robbed, ruined and driven from their land. (The typical plantation was divided into tenant farms without change of ownership. Only on the Sea Islands of South Carolina and Georgia did freedmen acquire considerable land. In 1910, three-fifths of Negro farms were operated by tenants, not owners, and their average size was one-half that of those operated by whites.)
3. Unfairly to the whites, illiterate Negroes were given the vote. (In 1880, more than one-fourth of the whites of Georgia, North Carolina and Alabama were illiterate. Between 1864 and 1870, the Freedmen's Bureau enrolled 250,000 Negroes in school in an attempt to overcome educational deficiencies.)
4. Untrained for anything but farming, the freedmen became vagrants in the towns. (At the end of the Civil War there were 100,000 skilled Negro craftsmen in the South, compared to 20,000 whites.)
5. Northern carpetbaggers and their Negro allies dominated state governments and Congress. (In Congress, there were never more than eight Negroes among 100 Southern Senators and Representatives. States in which Negroes were heavily represented were those with large Negro populations: South Carolina, Mississippi, Louisiana.)
6. Naturally enough, the freedmen used their new powers to punish the white man. (On the contrary, only about 150,000 Southern whites in a total electorate of 780,000 were disfranchised.

Those states which disfranchised most were West Virginia, Tennessee and Missouri, before Negroes were given the vote.)

### **Reconstruction in Mississippi**

Mississippi politics from 1865 to the end of the nineteenth century can conveniently be visualized in four periods. To each there corresponded a Mississippi “plan”. The four plans were: 1) To give the Negro such elementary civil rights as the capacity to marry and inherit property, but to deny him the vote and keep him a docile sharecropper for the white employer (1865–1867); 2) to give the Negro the vote, but not to give him property of his own (1867–1874); 3) to disfranchise the Negro by violence and intimidation, but not by law (1874–1890); 4) to disfranchise the Negro legally, but in a way that would not violate the Fifteenth Amendment (1890 to the present). Mississippi led the South in phases 3 and 4. The scheme begun in 1874, and that instituted in 1890 have each been called “the Mississippi Plan.”

Plan 1 (1865–1867). President Johnson appointed a former slaveholder and Chief Justice of the Mississippi Supreme Court, William Sharkey, as Provisional Governor in June, 1865. Sharkey at once: asked the President to withdraw Federal troops; authorized the formation of an all-white state militia; reappointed Confederate local officials; called a Constitutional Convention to be elected by white voters. Negro conventions meeting at Vicksburg in June and October, 1865, warned that Mississippi Negroes, confronted by disfranchisement economic peonage and police brutality, were being forced to choose between flight from the state and “virtual reenslavement.” As if to confirm this prophecy the state legislature passed the infamous “Black Code.” One clause of the Mississippi Black Code punished intermarriage between the races with life imprisonment. Also in the winter of 1865–1866, planters formed organizations pledged to employing Negroes only as sharecroppers.

The legislature elected under the Constitution of 1865 refused to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment which Congress passed in the spring of 1866. Governor Humphrey said: “This amendment is such an insulting outrage and denial of the equal rights of so many of our worthiest citizens, such a gross usurpation of the rights of the State, that I presume a mere reading of it will cause its rejection.” There was not one vote for the Fourteenth Amendment in either house of the Mississippi legislature.

Plan 2 (1867–1874). Under the policy of Congressional Reconstruction sponsored by Stevens and Sumner, 75,000 to 80,000 Mississippi Negroes (four times the number registered today) were registered to vote in 1867. This new electorate chose a new constitutional convention. The president of the convention was a property-less white man from Warren County, who said: “This hour brings to a final end that system that enriches the few at the expense of the many.” This convention provided for: manhood suffrage; a public school system; property rights for women; the end of imprisonment for debt; and the outlawing of discrimination in public accommodations, whether by government units or private corporations.

This new state government, while better than those which preceded and followed it, did not end the Negro’s economic subordination. The Federal military commander, General Gillem, notified Negroes in December, 1867, that they were expected to “go to work upon the best terms that can be procured” or be jailed as vagrants. In 1868, Mississippi planters agreed that Negro laborers attending “club meetings” without permission would be dismissed and their wages forfeited and further pledged not to hire again laborers so dismissed. The Governor of Mississippi

under the new dispensation, James Alcorn, had owned 100 slaves and been a Confederate brigadier-general.

Plan 3 (1874–1890). In 1874 and 1875 the white reactionaries of Mississippi overthrew the legally constituted government by force and violence. The terror began several years earlier. The books of the state auditor showed 54 killed in 1869 and 83 killed in 1870. In 1871 every Negro schoolhouse, or church used as a schoolhouse, in Winston County was burned. Thirty Negroes were killed in Meridian in March 1871. Between forty and eighty Negroes were killed in Vicksburg in November and December, 1874. Between thirty-five and fifty Negro and radical white leaders were killed in Clinton in September, 1875. Altogether 150 Negroes were killed during the years 1874–1876.

The violence in Clinton led the then-Governor, a Massachusetts man named Ames, to appeal for Federal aid. He was supported by the Negro Senator from Mississippi, Blanche K. Bruce. The other Senator, ex-Governor Alcorn, condemned the idea of Federal aid.

President Grant sided with Alcorn. He said: “The whole public are tired out with these annual autumnal outbreaks in the South.” Federal troops did not come.

Governor Ames thereupon organized a state militia composed of Negroes and whites. In October, 1875, however, he changed his mind and disbanded it. That same month six Negroes and two whites were killed at Friar's Point. Senator Alcorn assured the Attorney General of the United States: “there need be no alarm for the peace of this country. . . . A community of planters may be relied upon for kind treatment of laborers.”

The day before the election of 1875, a Negro wrote Governor Ames from Yazoo City: “I beg you most fully to send the United soldiers here; they have hung six more men. Now they are going to have war here tomorrow. Help, help, help, help, help.” On election day in Hinds County the Republican registrar was bribed to stay away. In Monroe County a bridge was destroyed and pickets posted to prevent the appearance of Negro voters. Still they came. Cavalry imported from Alabama then surrounded them; an artillery piece was trained upon them; and an armed squad moved among the Negroes beating them. In the North, The Nation magazine reported that “the election passed off quietly.”

On Christmas Day, 1875, one of the most militant Mississippi Negro leaders, Charles Caldwell, was shot down in the main street of Clinton. Before he died, Caldwell told his assassins: “Remember when you kill me you kill a gentleman and a brave man. Never say you killed a coward. I want you to remember it when I am gone.”

Plan 4 (1890 to the present). From 1875 to 1890, according to Judge Chrisman, “there has not been a full and fair count” in any Mississippi election. But in 1890, Congress threatened to pass a bill for Congressional supervision of elections. Thereupon a convention was called to disfranchise the Negro without violating the Fifteenth Amendment. This was the last “Mississippi Plan,” which became a model for all the other Southern states.

The Mississippi Constitution of 1890 required (1) payment of a \$2 poll tax, (2) ability to read the state constitution in order to vote, In order to permit poor whites to qualify a clause was included which empowered a registrar to accept a candidate who could not read but who, in the registrar's judgment, could “understand” the constitution.

Once this constitution was adopted, the Negro vote in Mississippi rapidly dwindled. By 1910 every Southern state had adopted similar suffrage requirements. At the same time they passed Jim Crow laws regulating every sphere of social life. Booker T. Washington indirectly accepted this

trend in his Atlanta Compromise speech of 1895. The Supreme Court upheld Jim Crow laws in *Plessy vs. Ferguson* (1896), and sanctioned the new voting regulations in *Williams vs. Mississippi* (1898).

#### Dates

1865-1866: Lincoln-Johnson Plan: the Southern states should not be punished by the North for their insurrection, but allowed back into the Union without qualifications. As a result, the Southern States enacted a program which was designed to reenslave the Negro, with Black Codes restricting the economic and political activity of the freedmen, and also violence and force. Charles Sumner and Thaddeus Stevens, two powerful abolitionists, protested the lack of economic and political provisions for the freedmen.

1866: Civil Rights Bill passed over the President's veto. Race riots continue in the Deep South (81 Negroes killed during May and June riots)

1867: Frederick Douglass leads a delegation to the President urging the ballot for ex-slaves. Acts passed by Congress in March dividing the Confederate States into military districts. The freedmen were given the right to vote. Ku Klux Klan held their first national meeting. Knights of the White Camelia (a white supremacist organization) were formed.

1868: The South Carolina Constitutional Convention met in Charleston in January. It was the first assembly of its kind in the West with a majority of Negro delegates (76 out of 124). Oscar Dunn, an ex-slave, was installed as Lt. Governor of Louisiana. It was the highest elective office held by an American Negro. Negroes were later elected Lt. Governor in Mississippi and South Carolina. Fourteenth Amendment became a part of the Constitution. Race riots continue in Louisiana.

1869: Ebenezer don Carlos Bassett became minister to Haiti and, as such, was the first Negro in the diplomatic service.

1870: Wright, a Negro, was made Associate Justice of the South Carolina Supreme Court. Hiram Revels succeeded Jefferson Davis as U.S. Senator from Mississippi. Joseph Rainey became the first Negro in the House of Representative sworn in as Congressman from South Carolina. Robert Wood, a Negro, was elected Mayor of Natchez, Miss.

1871: Race riots in Meridian, Mississippi.

1872: P. Pinchbeck became acting governor of Louisiana and then U.S. Senator in 1873.

1873: 60 Negroes were killed in Louisiana.

1874: White League, a racist organization, was founded in Louisiana. More violence in Tennessee and Louisiana. Several Negroes and Republican office holders were slain. Race riot in Vicksburg—35 Negroes killed. President issues a proclamation on violence in Mississippi.

1875: Civil Rights Bill was enacted by Congress. The bill gave Negroes the right to equal treatment in inns, public conveyances, theaters, and other public places.

1875: Blanche Keso Bruce, a Negro, entered the U. S. Senate from Mississippi.

1875: Racial conflict in Yazoo City, Mississippi.

1875: Racial conflict in Clinton, Mississippi. Negro leaders and Republicans killed.

1875: The Governor of Mississippi requests federal troops to protect the rights of Negro voters. Request refused.

1875: Conservatives won in Mississippi election and initiated the Mississippi Plan, staged riots, political assassinations and massacres and social and economic intimidation used later to overthrow Reconstruction governments in South Carolina and Louisiana.

1876: Racial conflict in South Carolina.

1877: Hayes agreed to withdraw federal troops from the South.

1877: President Hayes appointed Frederick Douglass as Marshall of Washington, D. C.

1877: Federal troops were withdrawn from the South.

1878: Tennessee initiated the modern segregation movement with Jim Crow railroad car law.

1883: The Supreme Court declared the Civil Rights Act of 1875 unconstitutional.

1884: John Roy Lynch, former Congressman from Mississippi was elected temporary chairman of the Republican Convention, becoming the first Negro to preside over the deliberations of a national political party. Massacre of Negroes in Carrollton, Mississippi.

1890: The Mississippi Constitutional Convention began the systematic exclusion of Negroes from political life of the South (Aug. 12 to November 1). Other Southern states followed Mississippi's lead.

1895: Booker T. Washington delivered his "Atlanta Compromise" speech.

*"Guide to Negro History" was written by Staughton Lynd, based on Barbara Jones' Negro history outline, and Bea Young's study of the Amistad case.*

**NEGRO HISTORY ADDENDUM I**

Jackson Freedom Schools, August 1964

Addenda to the Curriculum Sheet on Negro History

with special attention to the period 1900-1960's

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General Remarks to Workers in Negro History:

1) Objective: To explore the history of the Negro on the American scene in the hope of developing in the students an added appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of American patterns of race relations. Special concern should be given to Negro contributions to the culture, to white reactions, and to political problems and possibilities for the future in light of knowledge of the past.

2) Scope: Ideally, the discussions should touch upon African origins and come down, over time, to the present.

3) Coordinators: Staughton Lynd, Howard Zinn, Margaret Burnham, Bob Zangrando, among others will join in coordinating the program, and will be available as schedules permit for individual conferences. It is hoped that several among the volunteer teachers arriving August 3 will have special facilities in phases of Negro history and can be employed as preceptors for the work at-large.

4) The Project will maintain a reference library on Negro history at the Short St. office, & teachers are encouraged and expected to make maximum use of these books when they are available. On order so far are such works as:

- L. Bennett, Before the Mayflower
- J.H. Franklin, From Slavery to Freedom Schools
- M.J. Butcher, Negro in American Culture
- L. Hughes, Pictorial History of the Negro in the United States
- H. Aptheker, Documentary History of the Negro, Vols. I & II
- W.E.B. DuBois, Black Reconstruction
- W.H. Burns, Voices of the Negro Protest
- C.V. Woodward, Strange Career of Jim Crow
- R. Logan, Negro in American Life and Thought
- W.J. Cash, Mind of the South
- J.H. Franklin, Militant South
- Brink & Harris, Negro Revolution in America
- V.L. Warton, Negro in Mississippi
- L. Hughes, Famous Negro Heroes of America
- L. Lomax, The Negro Protest
- M. Herskovits, Myth of the Negro Past

There are, depending upon the specific book, from two to five copies of each of these. If teachers do not make the mistake of monopolizing more copies at any one time than they can justifiably



use, the rate of circulation should be sufficient to insure maximum advantage to the Project. Other works may be added, & we hope to acquire recorded & filmed items for direct classroom use. None of these items from the Project library should be released without careful consideration of the fact that their careless distribution could hamstring the smooth operation of the program.

Sometime in the course of the month, the staff will confer (on the basis of its knowledge of the students comprising the classes) for the purpose of selecting one or two paperback books which we hope to purchase and distribute to each of the students for his own personal possession of a useful book on Negro history and culture.

5) Keeping in Touch: The teachers are encouraged to use their talents and ingenuity within the broad outline of the program. Academic freedom will, of course, be encouraged in this as in every phase of the Freedom School. C.O.F.O. headquarters can be reached, when necessary by calling 352-9605 or 352-9788, always with the realization that the lines already bear a heavy load of incoming calls. Consultation & coordination with those administering the Project is encouraged. Teachers should note, too, that Ray Rohrbaugh is in charge of the Adult classes which will meet three nights a week at Pratt Memorial Church starting August 10, a Monday.

6) Location and Registration: The daily Freedom Schools will function at seven churches about the city of Jackson. Registration for these classes will take place all day at those sites (and at Pearl Street Church) on Wednesday August 5. When the classes are functioning, they—like other phases of the Freedom Schools—should take maximum advantage of the discussion technique, the students' participation, and perhaps the utilization of advanced and leading students as schools preceptors among their colleagues.

#### GENERAL OUTLINE FOR NEGRO HISTORY, 1900-1960's:

Naturally, topics can be added and deleted as it seems appropriate to do so in practice. The following represents suggested themes and specifics, and can complement the materials on the pink sheet (also distributed to teachers) which covers Negro history from the Civil War to the period around 1900.

#### (I) THE NEGRO AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY:

The fact that the atmosphere in America was decidedly hostile toward any considerations of racial equality:

- a) the abuses of Darwinism and the supposed biological distinctions between the races
- b) Widespread racism, and its contemporary victims:
  - the Negro
  - the "new immigrants" from southern and eastern Europe
  - the natives of colonial areas in the Caribbean, Africa, and the Pacific (In other words, the specious assumptions of Anglo-Saxon superiority)
- c) Nationalism and patriotic fervor demanded that the United States engage in and excel at imperialistic ventures.
- d) Acquiescence by northerners in the South's racial policies; would-be reformers distracted by industrial involvement and by sheer indifference.

(THIS WOULD BE AN APPROPRIATE POINT TO REFER TO OTHER PARTS OF THE CURRICULUM WHICH DISCUSS BROAD COMMUNITY

INDIFFERENCE TO INTOLERANCE AND PERSECUTION; cf. the discussion on Nazi Germany, for example)

e) Passage and enforcement by southern states of Jim Crow laws.

## (II) ROLE OF THE NEGRO LEADERSHIP IN THE EARLY YEARS OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY:

Booker T. Washington's emphasis on occupational, economic adjustment within a southern context. To what extent had the famous Atlanta speech of Washington played into white hands? To what extent was his position defensible?

Development of a more radical Negro protest leadership:

Niagara Movement of 1905

W.E.B. DuBois and the Soul of Black Folk

Monroe Trotter

The need for a broader, interracial protest: founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1909:

triggered by race riots in Springfield, Ill.

organized by social workers, journalists, ministers, lawyers, and other professional personnel

an example of reform during the Progressive Era on a regional basis

interracial composition: the Negro Talented Tenth is joined by white spokesmen having both influence and reputations

emphasis strong from the beginning on legal and judicial redress and interracial reform

## III) IMPACT OF WORLD WAR I UPON THE RACIAL SITUATION:

Stimulus for adjustment: Negro migration northern cities to meet labor shortage; Negro service in the armed services during a national crisis; shift in racial question from a sectional to a national scene.

Reactions of the white community: widespread race riots: East St. Louis, Chicago, Washington, D.C., etc; increase in lynchings during the war; broadened patterns of discrimination; whites demonstrate paralyzing effects of their fear of change (here again would be an appropriate place to refer to other aspects of the curriculum on the destructive consequences of fear, hatred, uncertainty, etc.)

NAACP seeks help and protection from Federal Government; President Wilson hesitantly denounces interracial violence. He had feared to antagonize the dominant element within Congress which represented white, southern Democratic House and Senate leaders. His actions, though few and late, confirmed the impact of national and world events upon American racial patterns. In other words, the racial question was not handled on its own merits but attended to only because it might prove embarrassing to the national war effort not to act (here see the parallels with F.D.R.'s order of June 1941 on F.E.P.C. and the broader Governmental reactions to civil rights during the Cold War).

## (IV) BUT CERTAIN CHANGES HAD OCCURRED AND COULD NOT BE REVERSED:

Migration of Negroes to the North had laid the base for a new political power bloc

A war to “Make the World Safe for Democracy” had opened the prospect of taking seriously the traditional American verbalizations about equality and individual dignity for all. During the 1920’s, the NAACP made the first protracted attempt in the 20<sup>th</sup> century for civil rights legislation on the Federal level; the Dyer anti-lynching bill passed the House of Representatives in 1922 but died at the threat of a southern filibuster in the Senate. Consequences:

- a growing Negro contempt for the false promises of Harding, Coolidge, and the Republicans of 1920’s
- the development of an awakened esprit with political possibilities within the Negro community
- some educational consequences for white politicians and public on the evils of lynching and racial patterns in the South
- further organizational strength for the NAACP as the then leader of the Negro protest for legal-judicial reform (success of NAACP before the Supreme Court on several instances in the 1920’s enhanced this trend)

Famous Harlem Renaissance of the 1920’s:

- Wide appreciation in northern metropolitan areas for Negro contributions to art, literature, and artistic expression generally. To what extent was this phenomenon limited in its impact upon long-range interracial reforms?
- Development, too, of Marcus Garvey’s Black nationalism, which appealed to quite a different audience. Why did it attract such wide attention? What did this indicate about the racial situation in the American democracy?

#### (V) IMPACT OF THE DEPRESSION OF THE 1930’S:

- An expanded role for the Federal Government in socio-economic matters, with the general acceptance by the public of this heightened “federal presence” in public matters.
- Some benefits to the Negro population from government work projects, but the positive features simultaneously blunted by widespread economic collapse, unemployment, and the displacement of defenseless sharecroppers and tenant farmers through agricultural reeducation programs.
- New Deal breakthrough in attention to Negro affairs with the appointment of several prominent Negroes to federal agencies.
- Again, raise the question of the implications of federal action upon interracial redress, the extent of such action, and the reasons why the political power structure within Congress prevented more persistent reforms from Washington.
- Try to have the students see from themselves the interrelationships between economic, social, and political status and reform.
- Added questions for the 1930’s centered about the competition between the NAACP and more radical proposals for Negro action. Note, for example, the friction and suspicion between NAACP and the Communist Party and the way in which the latter came to influence the National Negro Congress as a short-lived competitor of the NAACP.
- Some comment, too, might be made about the development of a white southern liberal group, centering about the Commission on Interracial Cooperation out of Atlanta, Ga.

**(VI) WORLD WAR II and the NATIONAL EMERGENCY:**

What were the consequences of the war for the Negro?

Did the American society respond to the race issue on its own merits, or did another type of crisis encourage response to Negro demands?

Negro protest leaders seek Government protection for Negroes in their fight against discrimination in the armed services and in defense employment. What did F.E.P.C. involve and why was it not totally effective?

How did the white community react? Discuss Harlem and Detroit race riots of 1943. Has there been sufficient correction of the basic problems which lay at the root of those incidents? Discuss Harlem riots of July, 1964.

**(VII) POST WAR ERA AND COLD WAR ACCOMODATIONS:**

What were the consequences for the society in having waged a costly and lengthy struggle against Nazi tyranny and racism? Did it affect Americans' self-image concerning the contradictions of the domestic racial policies?

How did the Cold War and the newly won independence of former colonial areas further pressure Americans into attending to the racial question? What made the American Negro identify with African independence?

What were the implications of and results from the Truman Civil Rights proposals, 1947-1949? Although proposed, anti-lynching legislation, permanent F.E.P.C., anti-poll tax regulations, etc. were not passed on the federal level. Why not? What stumbling block prevented their enactments?

Was the Brown case of May, 1954, a sudden departure, or was it a logical step in the half-century fight for legal-judicial redress led, at that point, by the NAACP?

How did white America react: in the North? in the South? in the Border states? What are the implications of "deliberate speed" and of "massive resistance"? What elements in the power structure inhibit the fulfillment of the Brown case's bright hope? How can they be changed? What elements in the power structure inhibit the fulfillment of the Brown case's bright hope? How can they be changed?

What is the cause, meaning, and utility of direct action?

Discuss with the students the roles of CORE, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, SNCC, and so forth. Examine the Montgomery bus boycott, the Little Rock integration case, the sit-ins in 1960, the violence in Albany Georgia and in Birmingham. What do confrontations of this kind suggest about the present racial situations?

What are the positive and negative features of having several Negro protest groups nationally instead of merely one or two?

In what contexts were the Civil Rights Acts of 1957, 1960, and 1964 passed? What do they suggest about the power of the Negro protest and about the reactions of the white community—conservative, liberal, and uncertain elements?

**(VIII) THE NEGRO TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE:**

What are the avenues for Negro advancement?

Will the white community, either privately or through the government, effectively resolve its own indecision on racial questions? What can help to facilitate a resolution here?

Discuss what the Negro has done and can do to help himself. Note the marked increase in action by the southern Negro.

Examine the roles of non-violence and direct action.

Examine the ways in which interracial reform can serve as a point of departure for a new moral, economic, and political revolution centering around the best tenets of democracy and carrying with it a rejuvenation of the American scene generally in matters of educational development, urban renewal, expansion of justice, broadened employment and economic consumption, international understanding, etc.

Among several that exist, what are the probable fruits of leaving solutions to the alternatives of the Citizens' Councils, the Black Muslims, and so forth?

What can and what must a young person do about such matters?

This discussion might provide a suitable opportunity to chat with the students about a wide variety of topics, including their formal education in the future, the processes for acquiring books and reading materials on their own, etc.

*The two history addenda covering the time after 1900 were written by Robert Zangrando (Bob Zangrando to Tom Wahman, August 15, 1964. SNCC Papers, Martin Luther King Library and Archives (Sanford NC: Microfilming Corporation of America, 1982; Reel 67, File 337, Page 0640).*

**NEGRO HISTORY ADDENDUM II**

JACKSON FREEDOM SCHOOLS.....AUGUST, 1964      NEGRO HISTORY

THE FOLLOWING IS MEANT TO SUPPLEMENT THE OTHER TWO ITEMS ON NEGRO HISTORY (that covering materials 1860-1900 and that dealing with 1900 the 1960's) and to round out information on the location and operation of the Jackson Freedom Schools.

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As presently planned, the schools will meet at the following locations:

Blair Street AME Zion Church, No. Blair and Davis St.  
 Cades Chapel, M.B. Church; Bailey and Ridgeway (1000 Ridgeway)  
 New Bethel AME Church; 2202 Decatur St.  
 Pratt M.E. Methodist Church; beyond the Short St. office (starts here on Monday, August 10—will use Pearl St. Church until then)  
 St. John M.B. Church; 2839 Comfort St.  
 St. Peter's Missionary Baptist; 125 East South St. near West St.  
 New Hope A.M.E. Church; Vine and Bonita Sts. in Tougaloo.  
 Mount Nebo Baptist Church; on Tupelo Street.

- I) The work in Negro History should begin with a discussion of African origins, culture, and patterns. What attributes of the African past particularly deserve attention? What motivated European slave traders to make their incursions into the African continent? What degree of cooperation and resistance did they meet? (The Project library has some copies of a very fine U.S. History text, Malone and Rauch, to which teachers may refer for general background on European policies and rivalries in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and in colonial times that followed.)

Comparisons here with the situation of enslavement discussed in the curriculum on Nazi Germany will prove helpful.

- II) What were conditions for the Negroes first brought to the New World? Note the contradiction—still unresolved—in the fact that 1619 saw BOTH the introduction of slavery and of representative government (House of Burgesses) into the American colonies. In what ways were conditions for the Negroes similar to and different from those of the indentured servants who were white?

Note that the repression of the Negro, legally, began to take shape during the last third of the 17<sup>th</sup> century in the southern colonies. What had economic and political patterns among the dominant white community to do with this important transition?

Note the several instances of repression in northern colonies during the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century when whites there succumbed to fear and to rumors of a Negro uprising (cf. especially the situation in New York).

What groups sought to soften and improve the Negroes' lot? Discuss role of the Quakers in the Middle Colonies and their belief in brotherhood and non-violence.

How did New England merchants in their patterns of trade contribute to the increase of slavery in the colonies?

### III) Era of the American Revolution:

What difference existed for the Negro in North and in South America so far as the attitude of the whites and of white religious groups were concerned?

In discussing the American Revolution and the successful break from England note the difficulty of reconciling slavery with the positions taken in the Declaration of Independence. What forced Jefferson to remove his criticism of slavery from the draft of the Declaration of Independence before it could be adopted by the Continental Congress? Here it might be appropriate to examine the persistent problems of effecting reform, especially interracial reform, in light of the political power structure in which southern whites played and continued to play so dominant and strategic a role. If the southern whites have not been sufficiently amenable to redress of racial suppression, how can the system itself conceivably be altered? What is the hope of generating political strength by Negroes themselves within the South to assure action regionally which will have an impact upon national political balance? What can the Freedom Democratic Party accomplish, and how can the students help?

At about this same period, what was the status and conduct of Negroes elsewhere in the western hemisphere? Here stress the work of Toussaint L'Ouverture and his colleagues in Haiti.

What did the Constitutional Convention do about slaves? What stipulations were made about counting Negroes for taxation and for representation? What agreement was reached on the slave trade at the 1787 Convention?

### IV) 1800 to the Civil War:

What proposals were advanced to rectify the slavery problem? What was the Colonization Society? How effective was that as a remedy to the contradictions inherent in maintaining slavery in a democratic society? Do examples of withdrawal still persist in the suggestions current today?

Building upon the spirit of the French Revolution and ideals of the Enlightenment in late 18<sup>th</sup> century, what had the several European nations done about slavery and the slave trade by the first third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century? How far behind these sentiments and actions was the American society?

What explained the intensified development of American slavery in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century? What explained the altered economic patterns that aggravated the plight of the slaves. Here consider the impact of increased cotton production encouraged by western migration. What aspects of political and economic competition added to enmity between the sections? How did the role of the federal government prove insufficient to allay the impending crisis? Consider the Missouri Compromise, the Mexican War, the Compromise of 1850, and the Kansas Nebraska Act. How did the supreme Court reflect the political and economic balance of the day in its Dred Scott decision?

AGAIN: what is the price of having the Negroes' lot left to the determination of others who control the power structure?

What groups refused to acquiesce in the slavery situation

Here discuss      the Abolitionists  
                          the pre-Civil War slave revolts  
                          the birth of the Republican party .  
                          the Underground Railroad.

With the coming of the Civil War, what hopes existed for a full reconciliation of the racial problem in America?

What inherent weaknesses persist in the assumption that others, no matter how well intentioned, can adequately secure true freedom for the Negro? What can and must the minority group do on its own behalf?

#### V) GENERAL REMARKS:

As the discussions progress over time, particular attention should be given to prominent Negroes who DID perform heroic and notable acts in their own interests and to the betterment of a democratic society.

Attention should also be paid to the effects of various institutions, the church, the political parties, the economic patterns and system, and so forth upon the interracial issue.

In what ways have whites helped or failed to help the Negro over time?

*The two history addenda covering the time after 1900 were written by Robert Zangrando (Bob Zangrando to Tom Wahman, August 15, 1964. SNCC Papers, Martin Luther King Library and Archives (Sanford NC: Microfilming Corporation of America, 1982; Reel 67, File 337, Page 0640).*



## **NEGRO HISTORY STUDY QUESTIONS**

### **20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY**

At the beginning of the century Negroes faced the threat of a complete apartheid system of caste. The white power structure was robbing them of the right to vote, subjecting them to intense economic exploitation, and grinding out segregation statutes, which made public humiliation of Negroes the outstanding feature of Southern life.

With court decisions and executive orders the national government supported this sectional drive. Economic pressure, mob violence, and hundreds of lynchings reinforced by terror the attack on Negro self-respect and the individual will to resist.

Against these odds Negroes continued their tenacious struggle to be free, as they made significant essential advances. Insistence on their own human dignity featured the literature of the new period. Lynchers were driven first into the constricting uniforms of the Southern police, and driven even there into public light. In the freer climate of the North, a militant Negro intelligentsia publicized Southern terror and attacked bigotry and terror in the North.

In Northern cities voting Negroes learned again the lessons of Reconstruction; political rights did not automatically free them from grinding poverty. Important victories of the first half of the century, however, had created an articulate educated leadership which turned its face to the Negro poor to devise methods and programs which would make equality a manageable goal.

Study questions for this period are by no means exhaustive, and they undoubtedly overlook important basic themes. The questions are largely based on two books; A Pictorial History of the Negro in the United States, Langston Hughes, Editor, and J. W. Schulte Nordholt, The People That Walk in Darkness. The latter is a Ballantine Paperback; both books were chosen for their availability rather than for academic excellence. Vol. II of Aptheker's Documents is useful for the first ten years of the century. Page references, when given, follow the initials of the editor or author.

#### I. Leadership

1. Who was Booker T. Washington? As he addressed Negroes in the midst of the campaign of white terror, what recommendations did he make about (a) political activity and (b) economic effort? H: 244; A: 877-79; N: 230-36
2. Who was W.E.B. DuBois? Summarize his criticism of Washington. H: 248-50; A: 877-79; N: 230-36.
3. Show how each of the following encouraged Negroes as a whole to approve the DuBois style of leadership:
  - a. the lynching record and white reaction H: 256-57, 266-67, 235; A: 792-804  
N: 243-54. 223
  - b. The migration to the North N: 241-44
  - c. Negro participation in World War I. N: 238-39; H: 262-66
  - d. Negro Economic conditions, 1900-1930:
    1. housing
    2. income and employment

## 3. Laissez-faire politics

II. Lynching

Lynching became a common practice in the years when Negroes were driven from the polls. It is necessary to examine this incredibly brutal practice in detail, in order to appreciate the full extent of white efforts to destroy Negro self-respect. Against this backdrop, when lynchings took place at the rate of one, two, and three a week for forty years, Negro survival and growth assumes heroic proportions.

Teachers and students should read the following material before working out the study questions: H: 233-34, 256-57, 266-67; A: 792-804; N: 243-53

1. Consult an Almanac to find out the record of lynching in the U.S.
2. Show how each of the following encouraged lynching:
  - a. race reporting practices of the press.
  - b. poor white living standards.
  - c. respectable Southern and Northern moderates.
  - d. greed. (N: 201)
3. Describe the most important achievements of Northern Negroes in silencing or otherwise resisting the lynch cry. H: 246, 267; N: 245\_47
4. What steps did Southern Negroes take to keep these terrorists at bay? H: 232-233; A: 792-804

III. The Struggle for Dignity and Self-Respect

The caste system has consistently encouraged the Negro to lose faith in his own powers. It is helpful to note some of the ways in which the system works.

1. What is a racial stereotype? How did the career of Bert William illustrate the evils of stereotyping? Name some other stereotypes. How did Katherine Dunham cut through this confusing fog? N: 263, 269; H: 272-79; N: 260-80
2. Relate the Harlem Renaissance of the Twenties to the question of stereotyping. H: 272-79; N: 260-80.
3. Show how Negroes destroyed many stereotypes
  - (a) in World War I H: 262-6
  - (b) in educational developments
  - (c) in the new style of race riots. H: 267
4. What economic problems perpetuated stereotypes?
5. Questions on Jazz—it's origins and influence.

IV. Economic Problems

Negroes lost many important gains of Reconstruction days because they had failed to wrest from the government an economic foundation for their political freedoms. This was a costly failure; ever since, problems of the Negro masses have to a large degree been problems of the poor.

1. Show how Southern emphasis on agriculture intensified Negro poverty in the Twenties and Thirties. N: 282-84

Why did cotton prices steadily decline?

Explain why the prices of manufactured goods which the poor had to buy remained high even during depressions.

2. Why is segregated education poor education? Show how Southern educational practices weakened the ability of city migrants to secure jobs.
3. Northern Negroes who voted continued to send their children to segregated schools. To what extent do Negro economic conditions help to account for this situation?

## ***THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEGRO POWER IN AMERICAN POLITICS SINCE 1900***

- a narrative and interpretive survey -

Otis Pease  
Stanford University

(Note: Written originally in Hattiesburg for its Freedom School staff to provide perspective on the tasks of the COFO Summer Project, this has been re-stenciled for greater legibility, and slightly revised, and is now available to anyone in COFO—school staffs, V.R. staffs, or otherwise—who wishes a copy. Stencils are deposited with the Jackson office.

This survey is one historian's interpretation of the subject. Written under pressure, it makes no claim for completeness or total objectivity. I look for discussion, argument, and even replies distributed similarly in a spirit of dissent. The Project will surely gain from any dialogue which grows out of this statement. —O. P.)

The present pattern of discrimination and prejudice against the Negro was forged mainly in the period from 1900 to 1930. These years were a time of political reform and social advancement for most Americans, even for immigrants and northern Negroes, but in retrospect they seem to have been the most humiliating years since slavery in the equal treatment of southern Negroes. Where they were once encouraged to vote and hold minor office (as in the delta in the 1880's) they were now kept from voting by law, by private coercion, and by habit. Where once the Negro leader of national prominence (Bruce, Lynch, Washington) represented the southern black man, he was now northern and urban in his interests (Du Bois, Trotter, White). Where white and Negro southerners once rode and ate in the same passenger cars and played in the same public parks (1865-1900, even after reconstruction ended), he was now excluded by local ordinance from virtually every possible contact with white people. Once the southern man of property courted him for his vote against the political power of the southern farmer of little property (about 1875 to 1890). Shortly thereafter the radical Populist attracted Negro support in an effective appeal to solidarity of the have-nots against the large landowner and industrialist. On both occasions the Negro tried to gain the advantages of political power, but in fact he never became more than a junior partner, and these alliances proved psychologically too difficult for southern white men to sustain in the face of the increasingly bitter appeals to racial solidarity on the part of whichever white group the Negroes were being encouraged to oppose. Between 1896 and 1903 every southern state possessing a substantial Negro population amended their constitutions to permit official white primaries and to prohibit—by ingenious laws—both Negroes and uncooperative poor whites from voting. Note the graphic case of Louisiana:

	White	Negro
1887 registration (old const.)	165,000	130,000
1900 “ (new const.)	125,000	5,000
1904 “ (poll tax added)	92,000	1,300

From this point forth, southern states were run by small, easily-controlled voting blocs which represented largely the upper half of the social structure.

It is generally believed that aggression feeds on frustration. The South in 1900 was a land ripe for aggression against a minority race, for economic problems were building to a climax of

frustrations. Two thirds of its white men lived in conspicuous poverty, and it was virtually impossible to persuade an impoverished white farmer to accord any break—economic or social—to Negroes who were only a few degrees worse off than they. Not only was per capita wealth in the South half that of the national average, but with nearly 30% of the national population the region had less than 12% of the nation's taxable incomes, and most of the income to the South centered in four states. Furthermore the southern economy was built on raw materials—cotton, lumber, ore, oil—which usually provide their economic return to those people who make them into finished products (the Massachusetts mill owner, the Chicago building contractor, the Pittsburgh steel producer). Meanwhile the southern Negro received the lowest wage in the nation, Negroes were excluded from the higher-paying cotton mills, and less than one Negro out of ten owned any land, cattle, or tools.

All this is to say that where in the North the economy was prosperous enough to permit upper portions of the working class to move into positions of independence and to permit the immigrant the hope of gaining something if he organized political power for himself, the southern small white farmer was caught in an endless cycle of poverty and his efforts to break the cycle were fitful and easily diverted into agitation against the Negro. Meanwhile the Negro was not permitted even to try. Both his disfranchisement and his segregation came to possess for white men a kind of moral imperative.

Liberals North and South commonly defended Negro disfranchisement on the grounds that political corruption would disappear and that, by forcing the Negro to concentrate on improving himself instead of increasing his power, race relations would quickly improve. It is true that overt frauds on election days declined slightly from the high levels reached during and after Reconstruction: the most effective way of stopping the stealing of ballots, of course, is to stop people from voting. But the political process remained as corrupt as before and far less responsive to the growing needs of the social order. It is equally clear that in proportion to the Negro's loss of political power his general security and independence deteriorated, and unchecked violence to his person and property grew. A system of cast had in time come to replace the system of slavery.

No man exceeded Booker T. Washington in influencing the Negro to better himself economically and to postpone his search for political power. Born a slave in Virginia, he was set free at the age of nine by the defeat of the confederacy, worked his way through school and was invited to run a new institute for Negroes at Tuskegee, Alabama. His quiet leadership and courage made Tuskegee into one of the leading vocational colleges in the nation. In 1895 Washington was invited to speak at the opening of the Atlanta Exposition. Sensing the importance of the unprecedented opportunity for a Negro to address such a large audience of influential white men, he urged upon Negroes and whites alike the wisdom of achieving mutual trust through mutually profitable economic relations: the Negro should not seek to leave the South or to agitate for political change but should “cast your bucket down where you are,” and gain the equal protection of the laws through his economic power; the white man should help educate the Negro to work more effectively for him. Americans instantly hailed Washington as the wisest leader of his race, and for the next twenty years, until his death, he was one of the most influential men in the nation. Five presidents consulted him about policies toward Negroes, Theodore Roosevelt invited him to dine at the White House, and Queen Victoria entertained him at tea. It was the day of Horatio Alger, but Alger had never written a store to equal the autobiography *Up from Slavery*. In his day Washington gained the firm support of the large numbers of northern capitalists for Negro vocational education, but it is evident that his “Atlanta Compromise” (work first, vote second)

suited the grim plans which southern whites had for Negro subordination, economic as well as political, and both were heavily reinforced by crucial changes in the attitude of northern leaders toward the Negro and his race.

Before the 1890's the Negro had hoped that occasional Federal intervention would sustain his newly-won rights of citizenship, suffrage, and equal treatment before the law and consequently permit him to break free from the caste system which even during Reconstruction had been chaining him down. But in a series of discouraging decisions (from 1883 through 1898) the Supreme Court overthrew or diluted the laws which had sustained him, while Congress and the Executive gradually came to terms with the politically powerful white southerners and their northern business partners, and by 1900 the Negro could no longer count on the Federal government to assist him in overcoming his hopelessly unequal political position. Northern Negroes could vote, but less than 10% of the nation's nine million Negroes lived in the North, and their political influence was slight. Meanwhile Northern liberals and conservatives alike fell prey to new views of race and social evolution which gained favor by virtue of their apparent scientific validity. These views tended to attribute behavioral differences between the Negro and the white man to innate differences in capacity, rather than to environment and culture, and they asserted—on decidedly incomplete evidence—that social and political pressures (such as civil rights laws or welfare programs) are virtually powerless to change the long-range behavior or attitudes of men towards other men. (It is ironic that Jim Crow laws provided an example of the effectiveness of social laws to influence long-range behavior and attitudes at precisely this same time.)

Thus in a day when doctrines of social reform—including a concern for the impoverished city immigrant, an interest in social legislation and in the constitutional rights of union laborers swept the Northern and parts of the white South and carried to national power men like George Norris, Robert LaFollette, Al Smith, Fiorello LaGuardia, Theodore Roosevelt, and Woodrow Wilson, the Negro exercised less real political power than at any time since his years of slavery. Many of his leaders had warned him of the fatal handicap of disfranchisement. In 1865 Frederick Douglass had demanded “immediate, unconditional, and universal voting . . . for without this the Negro's liberty is a mockery. . . . He is a slave of society, and holds his liberty as a privilege, not as a right. He is at the mercy of a mob, and has no means of protecting himself.” Douglass in fact saw through to the heart of the political process when he later insisted that so long as the Negro has a vote, “somebody in the South will want that vote and will offer the terms upon which that vote can be obtained.” (Two generations later Mississippi's Senator Bilbo, the nation's leading white-supremacy demagogue, remarked to a union organizer working among Negroes in Mississippi, “Son, when you can show me that you control any sizeable number of voters, I'll be the damndest champion you ever had.”) Even Booker T. Washington warned that while the Negro ought to put jobs and education ahead of politics he should never cease voting: “A man cannot learn self-government by ceasing to vote any more than a boy can learn to swim by keeping out of the water.” And now in the first thirty years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the consequences—in lynch law, Jim Crow, and economic discrimination—of political powerlessness were hideously plain. Washington had suggested that the Negro put dignity ahead of power and thereby salvage his dignity. But in putting dignity ahead of the power which forces men to respect dignity, the Negro lost both.

In symbolic contrast to Booker Washington stands the figure of William E. B. DuBois. Born in Massachusetts shortly after the Civil War in a family long free and prominent in a farming

community, he encountered little racial prejudice until he arrived at Fisk University in Nashville for his college training. In the year of the “Atlanta compromise” Du Bois earned a Ph.D. at Harvard and accepted a position of professor of sociology at Atlanta University. For the rest of his life, first in Atlanta and then in New York, he devoted his scholarship and his verbal skills to the position of the Negro race in a white society. As early as 1903 he vigorously rejected Washington’s “compromise”, and in a collection of powerful essays, *The Souls of Black Folk*, he stressed the primary importance of political influence, assertive leadership, and general pride which Negroes should feel in their race. His spirit can be seen in the remark he made urging that Negroes who face certain death from lynch mobs should resist them with violence. “If we must die, let us die like men and not like so many bales of hay.”

DuBois was an intellectual, but he was not a sheltered man. When living in Atlanta he risked his life by walking to town to show his disapproval of segregated buses. Now he was to urge Negroes everywhere to repudiate the “cowardice and apology” of their leaders. In 1905 he convened a meeting at Niagara Falls of about thirty prominent Negroes from 13 states, and as a challenge to Washington’s influence the conference demanded Negro action to obtain full suffrage and civil rights, abolition of Jim Crow laws, legislation to enforce the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> amendments, and to establish through Federal aid free and compulsory education through high school for every American child. The Niagara meeting did not at first attract wide support, but in 1909 a number of white liberals, outraged at the spread of lynching to northern cities (notably Springfield, Illinois, Lincoln’s home), founded the NAACP, which soon adopted the views of the Niagara conference and named DuBois as its general secretary. Slowly over the next twenty years but with increasing effectiveness the NAACP was able to focus the energies and hopes of northern liberals, white and black, who believed that the quest for political power must precede, not follow, the quest for economic and social gains. In 1930 in a dramatic public move the NAACP, led by the Negro secretary Walter White, strongly opposed the appointment to the Supreme Court of Judge Parker from North Carolina, who held hostile views of labor unions and favored Negro disfranchisement. Though Parker had President Hoover’s strong backing and hence would normally have had little trouble gaining Senate confirmation, so skillful and relentless was the NAACP effort in organizing Negro and labor sentiment against Parker that the Senate was finally pressured into turning down President Hoover’s appointee 41 to 39. This was, I believe, the first example in American history where the political pressure of Negroes—and organized by Negroes—effectively changed a major Federal policy. The NAACP had come of age, and the influence of DuBois had finally overshadowed the influence of Booker Washington in shaping the strategy of the Negro movement.

The Du Bois strategy of pressure through the vote would undoubtedly have failed had there not developed in the same period a massive shift in the Negro voting population itself—a shift toward the largest northern and western cities, and a shift which is still taking place fifty years later. The southern Negro was caught in a circle of frustration: he could not hope to gain political power except through Federal intervention, which responds only to pressure generated by the exercise of political power. But now it was possible to build new pressures on the basis of Negro votes in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, and in other cities where hundreds of thousands of them had moved in response to high wartime wages (1916-18; 1941-45; 1950-53) or to escape depression in cotton prices and agriculture generally (1920-22; 1930-35; 1947-50), or simply to flee the pervasive social and physical oppression of an era of almost unlimited white power. In those cities politicians in search of votes were not deterred from organizing the Negro

vote by the endless social pressures which beset every southern politician in search of votes. (Note that Bilbo did not offer to organize the Negro vote; he merely offered to bargain for the vote if it should ever come into existence.) In contrast with the southern Negro, the northern Negro in New York and Chicago found “friends” in the Tammany Hall clubs or in the Big Bill Thompson Republican machine, and the benefits of this alliance of voters with politicians soon resembled those gained by every other minority group in earlier days. By 1922 Tammany arranged to have 20 Negro policemen appointed to the New York force, and Negro leaders soon entered politics in the largest cities. (In 1929 Oscar De Priest from Chicago became the first Negro to gain a seat in Congress on the basis of a genuine political vote earned without benefit of Federal troops.) More important, Negro votes eventually lured city and state officials into support of basic Negro demands for street improvements, housing projects, welfare support, community centers, and expanded budgets for schools and teachers’ salaries.

Gradually the power of this vote affected the national government. Negroes did not vote in large numbers for the New Deal until 1934 and 1936, but when they did their support remained steadfast and became in time crucial to the political success of Harry Truman (in 1948) and John Kennedy (1960). Again, Negroes were voting for specific economic and social gains, and their votes paid off. The New Deal provided massive Federal price supports for cotton farmers, and in substantial numbers Negroes farmed cotton. The New Deal provided Federal relief for the unemployed, and Negroes were jobless. The New Deal directly encouraged CIO union organizing, and the CIO made a valiant and partially successful effort to set up bi-racial (not always integrated) unions to allow laboring Negroes to gain higher wages and greater security in their jobs. (Soon the more conservative AFL was forced by the success of its rival to do the same.) By 1943 Negro labor pressure, built up directly by Philip Randolph of the Pullman Porters’ Union, virtually forced FDR to support a national FEPC, and it could be strongly argued that by the time Truman had become President, the Negro had become one of the major voting blocs to shape national policies. Faced with a revived Republican Party—which every poll predicted would win the 1948 election—and with a 3-way split among Democrats (Henry Wallace on the left and the Thurmond Dixiecrats on the right), Truman was forced to scramble for every minority interest vote he could possibly appeal to. Organized labor and the mass of Midwest and Border-South farmers remained loyal to the Truman New Deal Democrats, but by themselves they did not win for Truman. It took the Negro vote in the large cities, and Truman won them by his strong support of a Civil Rights Commission, his plans for Federal housing, and his order to the armed forces to integrate their facilities and operations, as well as his proven record in support of the New Deal. From this point on (note that it was sixteen years ago) the national government permanently committed itself to the business of civil rights.

It would be foolish to suggest that this commitment was thorough or whole-hearted or more than partially effective. The New Deal operated not directly on the working classes but indirectly through local authorities. White landowners in southern cotton counties found ways of withholding Federal crop payments from Negroes who proved socially uncooperative. Control over unemployment relief and WPA projects was decentralized from the start, and local control usually reinforced local prejudices. Mere exercise of the vote in northern cities had little immediate impact on the fact that Negroes remained “last hired first fired.” As the New Deal voting strength declined (after 1937) the southern bloc in Congress began to exercise crucial veto power over national welfare-state policies, and in short order after the war a coalition of northern Republicans and southern Democrats killed off the national FEPC and bottled up much of



Truman's "Fair Deal" program for working people. Integration of the armed forces proved that southern white men in uniform could be forced to accept equality as part of the natural order of things, but integration could scarcely be said to have reached perfection. Everywhere in the Federal government there remained men in power who were unwilling to overthrow the compromises of the years following Reconstruction—the years in which the southern white man had been left in control of the southern Negro, when the Supreme Court had insisted that facilities could be separate and still be equal (1896) and that the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment did not prohibit private individuals, but only state governments, from practicing discrimination in the public facilities they owned or operated.

All this is true. And yet, it seems reasonable to state that by the 1950's the foundations as well as the structure of inequality and prejudice were beginning to crack.

For three decades social scientists had been studying the relationship of race to environment and personality in American society. Scholarly literature about the Negro reached a crescendo by the end of the 1930's, and most of it was summed up and greatly extended by the monumental 1000-page study (five years in the making) by Gunnar Myrdal, and his associates like Arnold Rose and Ralph Bunche. Called *The American Dilemma* (published 1944) it decisively challenged the hoary structure of myths about racial differences between Negroes and whites, identified the sources of behavioral differences as environmental and social, and consequently provided immense ammunition for every leader—Negro and white—who was resolved to break through the crusts of prejudice and legend and establish once and for all equality of opportunity through law, environment, and social custom. By 1950 the Myrdal study (and its condensation by Rose) had begun to spread through the educational and opinion-molding community of writers, teachers, editors, lawyers, social workers, and clergymen, particularly in the North but also through a few parts of the South. More important, these newer findings about race and social environment reinforced a newer national commitment to the absolute moral and practical necessity of equal respect for all people which as a nation we forcibly and effectively learned in war against Hitler's Germany and in our subsequent need to wield influence and gain security in a world three fourths non-white. The national climate of opinion on race, in short, had in fifty years begun substantially to reverse itself.

Before long the Federal government began to move again off dead center. In 1944 the Supreme Court outlawed the white primary, and from 1948 through 1954 it heard arguments in favor of compulsory desegregation of schools and universities. Finally came *Brown v. Board of Topeka*, which stated that racially separate facilities in education were inherently unequal. Running through the decision were significant strands of sociological argument, which suggested that the intellectual climate of the Myrdal study had indeed powerfully reinforced legal and political commitment to equality. The Executive branch of the government had meanwhile shown its determination (dormant for ninety years) to intervene forcibly in the jurisdiction of state governments (Little Rock, 1958; Oxford, 1962) to prevent open state defiance of Federal court decrees. And with shifting population Congress was no longer as subservient to the veto power of southern politicians, and in a series of hard-fought battles and compromises (1957, 1960, 1964) it committed the Federal government not merely to the old battleline of 1875, abandoned long ago, but pushed well beyond it.

It would be well to illustrate this briefly. The three recent civil rights acts viewed as a unit provide roughly for two things: they define specific acts of discrimination as being illegal even though state laws explicitly condone them; and they provide substantial power to the U.S.

Department of Justice to bring suits into Federal courts both on behalf of aggrieved individuals and on behalf of the government itself. A Federal Commission on Civil Rights is empowered to investigate alleged denials of the right to vote by reason of color, race, or religion, and the Justice Department may institute suits in Federal courts to require local registrars to register Negroes. If the court agrees that Negroes have been prevented from registering because of a pattern of discriminatory devices, it may appoint special referees with power to put qualified Negroes on the rolls. States are required to apply uniform standards to all applicants, immaterial errors in applying may not disqualify a person, a sixth-grade education would create a "presumption" of literacy, literacy tests must be in writing, and copies of the test and the applicant's answers must be furnished on request. The Department is also empowered to bring injunction suits to desegregate parks, swimming pools, libraries, and similar public facilities, including public schools. Private establishments in the public business of offering food, lodging, gasoline, or entertainment must serve all persons without regard for race, color, or religion, but proprietor-occupied lodging houses with five rooms or less, and bona fide private clubs, are exempt. No citizen on grounds of race can be excluded from the benefits of any program receiving Federal aid; in case of a violation, funds may be cut off. Discrimination by an employer, a union, or an employment agency because of race, color, religion, or sex, is prohibited in the hiring, firing, or promotion of workers; racial quotas, however, may not be used in enforcing the law. Finally, it is made a Federal offence to transport explosives across state lines for illegal use; this is designed to permit the FBI to undertake immediate investigation of any bombing without the prior request or permission of local authorities.

The growth of Federal interest in defining and protecting equal opportunities for Negroes in America, simply stated, represents a response to pressures in northern urban centers on behalf of Negroes everywhere, whether politically powerful (as in the North) or powerless (as in the deep South). These pressures came from more than organized votes: they were the result of a new generation of Negro leadership so imaginative and courageous in combating the forces of social discrimination that liberals in the white community—in government, in the universities, in the churches, and in the press—soon came to their support. The story of the Montgomery buses, the Greensboro sit-ins, and the Freedom riders to Jackson is now familiar enough to civil rights workers everywhere. It is worth stressing that the principal leaders of the movement in those years were Negroes, many with southern roots but principally with northern schooling and capable of tapping crucial support—political, legal, and moral—in northern communities. This was the generation of Martin Luther King, Thurgood Marshall, Bayard Rustin, James Farmer, Robert Moses, John Lewis, and James Forman; the organizations they led and the campaigns they fought led directly and effectively to powerful political support and to Federal commitment to ending legal and economic discrimination wherever it could be touched, North and South.

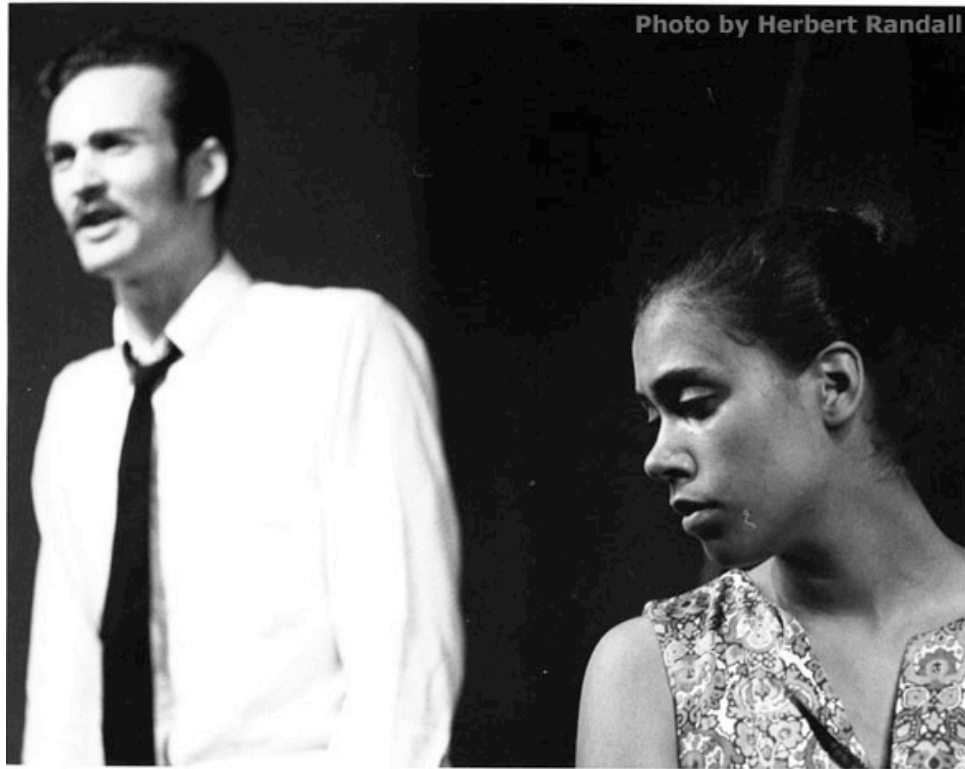
It is clear that direct political action by governmental authorities is unlikely to break patterns of discrimination unless this action gains reinforcement from long-range forces of social change. Fortunately, paralleling Federal action and the skillful work of Negro leaders has come a hopeful pattern of change in the total structure of the South. What was once a cotton economy tied to a single commodity world price has recently undergone extraordinary diversity, not merely for those who farm but for all others as well. The South has experienced major changes from industrialization and in the uses of its resources, and because of these changes a slow revolution has set in for the workingman. As in other highly developed and urbanized sections, the demand for skilled competence and advanced education in the laboring force is beginning to affect the

South, where over one third of the working force is Negro. As farmers continue to move to the cities and as labor unions improve their chances to win power, the Negro citizen is likely to improve his opportunities to organize his own political resources, for if the South is at all like the rest of the nation greater urbanization and greater union power are bound to stimulate the use and effectiveness of the vote. More important, the South is no longer “solid” either in economic patterns or in willingness to live with civil rights. Wherever enclaves of highly complex industry and a diversified agriculture have grown, the questions which engross the efforts of the civil rights movement have yielded partial solutions. It is probably no accident that Mississippi remains the least industrialized and the most segregated state in this region; its urban population is relatively scanty, its Federal industries are few, its “colonial” status is probably high—and its base for taxes, schools, welfare, and internal capital investment is about the lowest in the entire nation. The prospect for civil rights in this state would seem truly desperate at times if it were not for the example of well over half of the rest of the South. Over one hundred years ago, Abraham Lincoln saw clearly that if he was to preside over a victory against the South he would have to divide the South against itself. Much of his devious and opportunistic politics in 1861 and 1862 was devoted to splitting Kentucky, Missouri, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee off from the “hard-core” Confederacy. His final score was four states and half of Virginia, out of a total of seven slave states which appeared worth maneuvering for. It is safe to say that without these four and a half states, the Union could not have brought the Confederacy to terms. (He is said to have remarked that to win the war he hoped to have God on his side but the he must have Kentucky.) Lincoln’s strategy has been no less valid in the past generation. The civil rights movement today needs to take account of every broad economic and social force within the South which can possibly be seen as working for it. Surely among those forces are to be found a slow transformation in the southern social system and a region which is no longer a united “monolithic state of mind” but a perplexed, fissured, and divided collection of societies and people. It is, perhaps, out of this division that will come the true beginnings of determined and effective Negro political power.

Lest anyone think from these remarks that progress in establishing Negro power through politics will ever be easy in the South, I will end on a note of caution, that in one major respect the “hard-core” South does not resemble the rest of the nation. I refer to the entrenched one-party system, and it is well to ponder how this fact affects the chances of Negro political power. I will not take time to suggest how or why the one-party system developed; I want only to suggest some consequences of the system. I would state them this way.

1) Statewide minority groups can seldom gain a toehold where no fairly stable “opposition party” exists. Any group which wants to use its small vote to win favors from majority voters must make deals with an organized party which can deliver on its promises or can be counted on because of its permanence in the community. One-party politics, in other words, encourages domination by factions which derive their strength from ad hoc and temporary alignments of politicians rather than stable and relatively permanent groups representing well-defined interests.

2) Factional politics in the South tends to decentralize political power. County leaders and local landowners are not easily held to accountability for acts of violence or intimidation. No state-wide “check power” against the dominant factions exists to make sure that minority rights are cared for.



*"In White America" performance by the Free Southern Theater*

## ***IN WHITE AMERICA***

A DOCUMENTARY PLAY

By Martin B. Duberman

Two Scenes from the Second Act

NARRATOR:

In 1866, the Radical Wing of the Republican party gained control of Congress and gave the Negro the right to vote. At once, the Ku Klux Klan rose to power in the South . . .

THE HOODED FIGURE:

Before the immaculate Judge of Heaven and Earth, and upon the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God, do, of my own free will and accord, subscribe to the sacredly binding obligation: We are on the side of justice, humanity, and constitutional liberty, as bequeathed to us in its purity by our forefathers. We oppose and reject the principles of the Radical party.

*(Music—guitarist)*

*I hate the Freedmen's Bureau*

*And the uniform of blue*

*I hate the Declaration of Independence, too.*

*With all its fume and fuss,*

*And them thievin', lyin' Yankees  
Well, I hate 'em wuss and wuss.*

NARRATOR:

Acts of violence by the Klan were investigated by the Federal government in a series of hearings and trials.

PROSECUTOR:

What was the purpose of the Ku Klux Klan? What were the raids for?

KLANSMAN:

To put down radicalism, the raids were for.

PROSECUTOR:

In what way were they to put down Radicalism?

KLANSMAN:

It was to whip them and make them change their politics.

PROSECUTOR:

How many raids have you been on by order of the Chief?

KLANSMAN:

Two, sir.

PROSECUTOR:

Now, will you state to the jury what was done on those raids?

KLANSMAN:

Yes, sir. We were ordered to meet at Howl's Ferry, and went and whipped five colored men. Presley Holmes was the first they whipped and then went on and whipped Jerry Thompson: went then and whipped Charley Good, James Leach and Amos Lowell.

PROSECUTOR:

How many men were on these raids?

KLANSMAN:

I think there was twenty in number.

PROSECUTOR:

How were they armed and uniformed?

KLANSMAN:

They had red gowns and had white covers over their horses. Some had pistols and some had guns.

PROSECUTOR:

What did they wear on their heads?

KLANSMAN:

Something over their heads came down. Some of them had horns on.

PROSECUTOR:

Disguises dropped down over their faces?

KLANSMAN:

Yes, sir.

PROSECUTOR:

What was the object in whipping those five men you have named?

KLANSMAN:

The object in whipping Presley Holmes, was about some threats he had made about him going to be buried in Salem graveyard.

PROSECUTOR:

What was the first to occur?

KLANSMAN:

Well, sir, Webber—he was leading the Klan—ran into the yard and kicked down the door and dragged him out, and led him off about two hundred yards, and whipped him.

PROSECUTOR:

How many lashes did they give him?

KLANSMAN:

I cannot tell you how many.

PROSECUTOR:

Did they whip him severely or not?

KLANSMAN:

His shirt was stuck to his back.

PROSECUTOR:

What occurred at the next place?

KLANSMAN:

They whipped Jerry Thompson at the next place; told him never to go to any more meetings; to stay at home and attend to his own business.

PROSECUTOR:

What was done at the next place?

KLANSMAN:

They went there and whipped Charley Good. They whipped him very severe; they beat him with a pole and kicked him down on the ground.

PROSECUTOR:

What did they tell him?

KLANSMAN:

To let Radicalism alone; if he didn't his doom would be fatal.

(The lights fade. They come up immediately on another examination. A Negro woman, HANNAH TUTSON, is being questioned.)

LAWYER:

Are you the wife of Samuel Tutson?

MRS. TUTSON:

Yes, sir.

LAWYER:

Were you at home when he was whipped last spring?

MRS. TUTSON:

Yes, sir; I was at home.

LAWYER:

Tell us what took place then, what was done, and how it was done.

MRS. TUTSON:

That night, just as I got into bed, five men bulged right against the door, and it fell in the middle of the floor. George McRae ran right to me. As I saw him coming I took up the child-the baby-and held to him. I started to scream and George McRae caught me by the throat and choked me. And he caught the little child by the foot and slinged it out of my arms. They got me out of doors. The old man was ahead of me, and I saw Dave Donley stamp on him. They carried me to a pine, and then they tied my hands there. They pulled off all my linen, tore it off so that I did not have a piece of rag on me as big as my hand. I said, "Men what are you going to do with me?" They said, "God damn you, we will show you; you are living on another man's premises." I said, "No; I am living on my own premises; I gave \$150 for it and Captain Buddington and Mr. Mundy told me to stay here." They whipped me for awhile. Then George McRae would say, "Come here, True-Klux." Then the True-Klux would step off about as far as (pointing to a member of the committee) that gentleman and whisper; when they came back, they would whip me again. Every time they would go off, George McRae would make me squat down by the pine, and he would get his knees between my legs and say, "Old lady, if you don't let me have to do with you, I will kill you." I said, "No"; they whipped me. There were four men whipping me at once.

LAWYER:

How many lashes did they give you in all?

MRS. TUTSON:

I cannot tell you, for they whipped me from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet. I was just raw. After I got away from them that night I ran to my house. My house was torn down. I went in and felt where my bed was. I could not feel my little children and I could not see them.

LAWYER:

Did you find your children?

MRS. TUTSON:

I did next day at 12 o'clock.

LAWYER:

Where were they?

MRS. TUTSON:

They went out into the field.

LAWYER:

Did the baby get hurt—the one you had in your arms when they jerked it away?

MRS. TUTSON:

Yes, sir; in one of its hips. When it began to walk one of its hips was very bad, and every time you would stand it up it would scream. But I rubbed it and rubbed it, and it looks like he is outgrowing it now.

(Music-Guitarist)

You've got to cross that lonesome valley,  
You've got to cross it by yourself.  
There ain't nobody can do it for you,  
You've got to cross it all alone.

NARRATOR:

Federal investigations were not followed by effective Federal action. From 1878 to 1915 over 3000 Negroes were lynched in the South—a necessary protection, it was said, against Negro rapists. Yet most lynchings were either for no offense or for such causes as “Insult,” “Bad Reputation,” “Running Quarantine,” “Frightening Children by Shooting at Rabbits,” or “Mistaken Identity.”

On January 21, 1907, United States Senator Ben Tillman, of South Carolina, gave his views on the subject from the Senate floor.

SENATOR TILLMAN:



Mr. President, a word about lynching and my attitude toward it. A great deal has been said in the newspapers, North and South, about my responsibility in connection with this matter.

I have justified it for one crime, and one only. As governor of South Carolina I proclaimed that, although I had taken the oath of office to support law and enforce it, I would lead a mob to lynch any man who had ravished a woman.

Mr. President..When stern and sad—faced white men put to death a creature in human form who has deflowered a white woman, they have avenged the greatest wrong, the blackest crime in all the category of crimes.

The Senator from Wisconsin prates about the law. Look at our environment in the South, surrounded, and in a very large number of counties, outnumbered by the negroes—engulfed, as it were, in a black flood of semi-barbarians. For forty years, negroes have been taught the damnable heresy of equality with the white man. Their minds are those of children, while they have the passions and strength of men.

Let us carry the Senator from Wisconsin to the backwoods of South Carolina, put him on a farm miles from a town or railroad, and environed with negroes. We will suppose he has a fair young daughter just budding into womanhood; and recollect this, the white women of the South are in a state of seige. . . .

That Senator's daughter undertakes to visit a neighbor or is left home alone for a brief while. Some lurking demon who has watched for the opportunity seizes her; she is choked or beaten into insensibility and ravished, her body prostituted, her purity destroyed, her chastity taken from her, and a memory branded on her brain as with a red-hot iron to haunt her night and day as long as she lives.

In other words, a death in life. This young girl, thus blighted and brutalized drags herself to her father and tells him what has happened. Is there a man here with red blood in his veins who doubts what impulses the father would feel? Is it any wonder that the whole countryside arises as one man and with set, stern faces, seek the brute who has wrought this infamy? And shall such a creature, because he has the semblance of a man, appeal to the law? Shall men coldbloodedly stand up and demand for him the right to have a fair trial and be punished in the regular course of justice? So far as I am concerned he has put himself outside the pale of the law, human and divine. He has sinned against the Holy Ghost. He has invaded the holy of holies. He has struck civilization a blow, the most deadly and cruel that the imagination can conceive. It is idle to reason about it; it is idle to preach about it. Our brains reel under the staggering blow and hot blood surges to the heart. Civilization peels off us, any and all of us who are men, and we revert to the original savage type whose impulses under such circumstances has always been to "Kill! Kill! Kill!"

\* \* \* \* \*

NARRATOR:

There was no major breakthrough until 1954, when the Supreme Court declared segregation in public schools unconstitutional. Southern resistance to the court's decision came to a head three years later at Little Rock, Arkansas, when a fifteen-year-old girl tried to go to school at Central high.

GIRL:

The night before I was so excited I couldn't sleep. The next morning I was about the first one up. While I was pressing my black and white dress-I had made it to wear on the first day of school-my little brother turned on the TV set. They started telling about a large crowd gathered at the school. The man on TV said he wondered if we were going to show up that morning. Mother called from the kitchen where she was fixing breakfast, "Turn that TV off!" She was so upset and worried. I wanted to comfort her so I said, "Mother, don't worry!"

Dad was walking back and forth, from room to room, with a sad expression. He was chewing on his pipe and he had a cigar in his hand, but he didn't light either one. It would have been funny, only he was so nervous.

Before I left home, Mother called us into the living room. She said we should have a word of prayer. Then I caught the bus and got off a block from the school. I saw a large crowd of people standing across the street from the soldiers guarding Central. As I walked on, the crowd suddenly got very quiet. For a moment all I could hear was the shuffling of their feet. Then someone shouted, "Here she comes, get ready!" The crowd moved in closer and then began to follow me, calling me names. I still wasn't afraid. Just a little bit nervous. Then my knees started to shake all of a sudden and I wondered whether I could make it to the center entrance a block away. It was the longest block I ever walked in my whole life.

Even so, I still wasn't too scared because all the time I kept thinking that the guards would protect me.

When I got right in front of the school, I went up to a guard. He just looked straight ahead and didn't move to let me pass him. I stood looking at the school-it looked so big! Just then the guards let some white students go through.

The crowd was quiet. I guess they were waiting to see what was going to happen. When I was able to steady my knees, I walked up to the guard who had let the white students in. He too didn't move. When I tried to squeeze past him, he raised his bayonet and then the other guards closed in and they raised their bayonets.

They glared at me with a mean look and I was very frightened and didn't know what to do. I turned around and the crowd came toward me.

They moved closer and closer. Somebody started yelling "Lynch her! Lynch her!"

I tried to see a friendly face somewhere in the mob—someone who maybe would help. I looked into the face of an old woman and it seemed a kind face but when I looked at her again, she spat on me.

They came closer, shouting, “No nigger bitch is going to get in our school. Get out of here!” Then I looked down the block and saw a bench at the bus stop. I thought, “If I can only get there I will be safe.” I don’t know why the bench seemed a safe place to me, but I started walking toward it. I tried to close my mind to what they were shouting, and kept saying to myself, “If I can only make it to the bench I will be safe.”

When I finally got there, I don’t think I could have gone another step. I sat down and the mob crowded up and began shouting all over again. Someone hollered, “Drag her over to the tree! Let’s take care of the nigger.” Just then a white man sat down beside me, put his arm around me and patted my shoulder.

(During last part of the speech, white actor sits beside her on bench.)

WHITE MAN:

She just sat there, her head down. Tears were streaming down her cheeks. I don’t know what made me put my arm around her, saying, “Don’t let them see you cry.” Maybe she reminded me of my 15-year-old daughter.

Just then the city bus came and she got on. She must have been in a state of shock. She never uttered a word.

GIRL:

I can’t remember much about the bus ride, but the next thing I remember I was standing in front of the School for the Blind, where Mother works. I ran upstairs and I kept running until I reached Mother’s classroom.

Mother was standing at the window with her head bowed, but she must have sensed I was there because she turned around. She looked as if she had been crying, and I wanted to tell her I was all right. But I couldn’t speak. She put her arms around me and I cried.

WHITE ACTOR (sings):

They say down in Hines County  
No neutrals can be met,  
You’ll be a Freedom Rider,  
Or a thug for Ross Barnett.

(WHOLE CAST, looking at each other, not the audience, quietly sings four lines of “Which Side Are You On”)

NARRATOR:

After 1957, the Negro protest exploded-bus boycotts, sit-ins, Freedom Rides, drives for voter registration, job protests.

NEGRO MAN:

After 400 years of barbaric treatment, the American Negro is fed up with the unmitigated hypocrisy of the white man.

WHITE MAN:

The Negroes are demanding something that isn't so unreasonable.

NEGRO MAN:

To have a cup of coffee at a lunch counter.

WHITE MAN:

To get a decent job.

NEGRO WOMAN:

The American Negro has been waiting upon voluntary action since 1876.

WHITE MAN:

If the thirteen colonies had waited for voluntary action this land today would be part of the British Commonwealth.

WHITE WOMAN:

The demonstrations will go on for the same reason the thirteen colonies took up arms against George III.

NEGRO MAN:

For like the colonies we have beseeched.

NEGRO WOMAN:

We have implored.

NEGRO MAN:

We have supplicated.

NEGRO MAN:

We have entreated.

NEGRO WOMAN:

We are writing our declaration of independence in shoe leather instead of ink.

WHITE MAN:

We're through with tokenism and gradualism and see-how-far-you've-comeism.

WHITE MAN:

We're through with we've-done-more-for-your-people-than-anyone-elseism.

NEGRO WOMAN:

We can't wait any longer.

NEGRO MAN:

Now is the time.

WHITE ACTOR

(stepping forward, reads from document):

We the people of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union...

WHITE ACTOR (con't):

. . . establish justice, insure domestic  
Tranquility, provide for the common defence,  
promote the general Welfare and secure the  
Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our  
Posterity, do ordain and establish  
this Constitution for the United States of  
America...

NEGRO ACTRESS (sings under

"We the People..." slowly  
building in volume):

Oh, Freedom

Oh, Freedom-

Oh, Freedom over me!

And before I'll be a slave

I'll be buried in my grave

WHOLE CAST:

. . . And go home to my Lord and be free

Duberman, Martin B., *In White America*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1964.  
(First Scene: The Klan, p43-52; Second Scene: Little Rock, p 64-69.)

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## ***THE MISSISSIPPI POWER STRUCTURE***

### **Part I: Where Their Money Comes From**

In 1961 Senator James O. Eastland and his family produced 5,394 bales of cotton on their plantation in Sunflower County. They sold this cotton for about \$890,000. It cost them about \$566,000 to produce the cotton. So they made a profit of about \$324,000 on the cotton produced on their land in 1961.

A part of the cost of producing the cotton on which the Eastlands made this profit was what the Eastlands had to pay the people who actually did the work in the fields—the plowing, planting, chopping and picking. We don't know exactly how much the Eastlands paid their workers, but we do know that hired labor in the cotton fields in the area was being paid \$.25 to \$.30 per hour. Let's say the Eastlands were paying top dollar for field work—\$3.00 per day for ten hours' work. For a six day week, the worker would be paid \$18.00. The cotton season runs from sometime in March to sometime in December. Thus the cotton field worker would get, at the most nine months', or about 36 weeks' work. On this basis his earnings from the year's work would come to around \$648.00. Who makes money when Negroes are paid less than white people?

In the cotton-producing sections of the Delta, cotton field work is traditionally done by Negroes. Whites, except the rapidly disappearing sharecroppers and tenant farmers, and small producers, do not engage in this type of work. They consider it beneath them, in both dignity and money. Thus in the cotton-producing areas, the money that Negroes should be making from work in the cotton fields is not going to white workers so much as it is to the land owners, the planters. In other words, whites are not in competition for work in the cotton fields. This, in terms both of dignity and of income, is the price the wealthy planters have paid to the poor whites for their alliance against their natural allies, Negroes. The myths of which we've been speaking have thus brainwashed the whites into working directly against their own interest.

This alliance between wealthy whites and not-so-wealthy whites can be measured in terms of education, income, and job opportunities. The 1960 census reports that 72.7% of the Negro people in Sunflower County over 25 had less than six years of school; while only 16.7% of the white people over 25 had less than six years. Thus white wealth has been willing to pay the taxes to provide school facilities for whites, but not for Negroes. The 1960 census reports that 90.8% of the Negro families in Sunflower County had annual incomes less than \$3,000 while only 21.5% of the white families in the county had incomes under that figure.

This disparity of family incomes is directly traceable to the disparity of job opportunities. In 1960, according to the census reports, 60.2% of employed Negroes in Sunflower County had jobs either as private household servants or as farm laborers. These job categories were filled by only 9.7% of the employed whites. And on the other side of the coin, 53.2% of the whites employed had jobs in technical, sales, professional and operative positions, while only 10% of the employed Negroes had such jobs.

The jobs in which the whites preponderate are better not only from the point of view of money earned, but they are less burdensome, physically, they involve fewer hours work, and they permit the preservation of a kind of personal dignity which can hardly survive the implied depreciations of personal service and farm labor.

Of course, this is not to say that employed whites have actually bettered themselves at the expense of Negroes. The fact is that they have been the victims of a brainwashing every bit as

vicious as that practiced on Negroes. Whites in Sunflower County, indeed throughout Mississippi, have been led to believe that they can best measure their status in life by comparing it with those beneath them in the economic and social scales, rather than with those above them. It seems doubtful that the \$50-a-week clerk in a dry goods store in Indianola would think himself so well-off if he compared his position with that of the \$200,000-a-year planter, rather than with the \$188-a-week farm laborer. But in fact he does not. The white worker sees the plight of the Negro worker and, just as his master has taught him, he subscribes to the myth of the inferiority of the Negro. What he doesn't realize is that at the same time he is subscribing to another myth—the one which says that everyone in our society has an equal opportunity to attain wealth and comfort and that those who have reached the \$200,000-a-year bracket have done so on the basis of superior ability and hard work. If that white worker were not so completely brainwashed he would look at Senator Eastland's riches and would realize that Senator Eastland never did anything to earn them except be born to a man who owned much land. And if he looked a bit further he would see that Senator Eastland's father obtained that land in the same way Senator Eastland obtained it. If it was ever earned by superior ability and harder work, that was many generations ago. If the white worker threw off the effects of his brainwashing, and saw reality for what it is, he would turn to his black brother and say, come, we shall, together, build a political machine which will ensure that some will not live in the lap of luxury while others must sit in an unheated shack and listen to their babies crying for the milk they cannot provide.

It is the fear that the white worker will eventually see this reality which haunts the nights of the planters and industrialists who are presently amassing great fortunes from the work of Mississippi people, black and white.

Not long ago a group of workers at the plant of Durant Sportswear, Inc. decided they were not being paid enough by the owners of the factory, so they arranged to have an election of all the workers in the plant to see if a majority of the workers wanted a labor union to come in and force the owners to pay higher wages. What did the owners of the plant do? They began immediately to convince the white workers that the labor union would be integrated and that Negroes would begin getting their jobs. A majority of the brainwashed white workers believed the owners and voted against the union. Now they have the same wages as they had before, but, fools that they are, they take comfort in the whiteness of the plant force. Were it not for the brainwashing of years, they would have realized that their jobs are not safe so long as one man, black or white, has no job, because the owners themselves know that the workers have rejected organization, will threaten the white workers with Negroes whenever the white workers try to get higher wages. This is a pattern which has been going on ever since the first factory was built in Mississippi.

And while the owners of industry are brainwashing the white workers, they are picking their pockets at the same time. Take for example, the Baldwin Piano Company in Greenwood. Baldwin wanted to start making piano cases and organ cases in Greenwood, because the labor was cheaper there and because Greenwood was closer to the supply of raw materials necessary to make the cases. Baldwin went to the city of Greenwood and to Leflore County and told them that if the city and county would build them a \$3,000,000 plant and put the kind of machinery in they wanted, that Baldwin would move its operation there. The city and the county officials went to the bankers and the utilities executives and the landowners and the merchants of Greenwood to see what they thought should be done. All these people were very eager to have the plant there—the bankers wanted the large deposits of money the company would have to put in their banks; the

land owners knew the people working in the plant would have money to spend on all kinds of things, and that, therefore, homes would be built and there would be a general increase in the demand for property and so land prices would go up; the merchants knew that the people working in the plant would spend the money they made in the local stores; the utility company knew the plant would require large amounts of electricity; so all the city fathers said, why certainly, it will be good for the economy to have this factory here. So they borrowed the \$3,000,000 and built the plant and equipped it with the machinery Baldwin wanted, and then they rented the plant to Baldwin for enough money to pay back the \$3,000,000 that had been borrowed to build it. Baldwin was delighted because the plant was actually the property of the city of Greenwood, and therefore, not subject to property tax. Since Baldwin would be paying rent, instead of paying on a loan as they would have had to do if they had built the plant themselves, the \$3,000,000 they would have to pay out in rent would be tax deductible. Had they built the plant themselves, the payments would not have been deductible.

So the people in the North who own the Baldwin Piano Company can sell the materials that are made in the Greenwood plant, and out of the proceeds of the sale, they only have to pay the salaries of the employees in Greenwood and the operating expenses. The rest they can put in their pockets. If the plant had been built by Baldwin, and the machinery bought by Baldwin, then Baldwin would have to pay property taxes on the land, the buildings and the machinery. These property taxes would be spent for better schools, and streets and all kinds of other services. Since Baldwin doesn't have to pay these taxes, the people who live in Greenwood have to pay all of them, and the people who own the Baldwin Piano Company just get richer and richer.

We've been talking about how the cotton planters make profit from the labor of workers, and how the manufacturers do the same while neither cotton planters nor manufacturers pay a fair wage or their fair share of taxes.

Now let's take a case in which it is very clear how all this comes about. In 1959 the Standard Oil Company of California decided it would like to build a refinery in Pascagoula, Mississippi. They wanted to build the refinery there for a number of reasons: 1) it would be close to the Mississippi and Louisiana oil fields so it would cost very little to transport the crude oil from the wells to the refinery; 2) Pascagoula has the kind of port in which large tankers can pull right up to the refinery docks and load the products of the refinery onto ships which will carry it to retail markets; 3) many people are out of work in Mississippi, so labor will be very cheap—men who are desperate to find a job so they can feed their families will work for almost nothing; 4) Mississippi has a right-to-work law in its constitution which makes labor organizations very difficult; 5) if workers cannot organize into labor unions, company owners like Standard Oil know they'll be able to continue paying very low wages.

So representatives of the Standard Oil Company of California had a meeting with Governor Ross Barnett and other state officials. The Standard Oil Company representatives told the State officials that if the State would exempt oil refineries from taxation and would sell Standard Oil Company the land they wanted, that Standard Oil Company would build the refinery there. The politicians and those behind them, all wealthy men, wanted very much for Standard Oil to build the refinery. So they agreed to do what Standard Oil wanted. The Governor called a special session of the legislature. The legislature passed resolutions proposing amendments to the Mississippi constitution which would exempt the refinery from property taxation, and would permit the state to sell to Standard Oil Company a piece of land which the Congress of the United States has given to Mississippi people for financing and building schools. As soon as these



resolutions had been passed in the Mississippi legislature, an election was called, because the people have to vote on amendments to the constitution. A very small proportion of the voters voted in the election, because they didn't really understand what was going on. All of the proposed amendments to the constitution were passed in the election. Then the governor called the legislature back into session and passed the laws that Standard Oil Company wanted passed. The Standard Oil Company built the refinery in Pascagoula at a cost of \$125,000,000 and it just recently went into operation. Standard Oil will never have to pay any property taxes on this \$125,000,000 refinery, because the governor and legislature by hoodwinking the people, got the refinery exempted from such taxation.

## **Part II: Industry and Politics**

Electric power and finance capital form the keystone of industrialization, with which Mississippi is most concerned today. Mississippi Power and Light is the largest producer of electric power in Mississippi. Electric power is fundamental to commerce and industry. Deposit Guaranty Bank and Trust Company of Jackson and the First National Bank of Jackson are the two largest banks in the state of Mississippi. You cannot do business in the State without dealing, directly or indirectly, with one of the two banks.

The White Citizens' Council, through its connections in political and economic structures dominates the prevailing social policies throughout the state. We will show that electric power and finance capital play a leading role in the White Citizens' Council of Mississippi.

The overwhelmingly dominant political machinery in Mississippi is the Mississippi Democratic Party. We will show that electric power, finance capital and the White Citizens' Council dominate the Democratic Party.

First, R. B. Wilson of Jackson, Mississippi, is a member of the Board of Directors of Middle South Utilities. Mr. Wilson is also President and a member of the Board of Directors of Mississippi Power and Light, which is wholly-owned by Middle South Utilities. In addition, Mr. Wilson is a member of the Board of Directors of the Deposit Guaranty Bank and Trust Company of Jackson, the largest bank in the state of Mississippi.

Then there is William P. McMullan, who is a Director of Mississippi Power and Light. Mr. McMullan is also Chairman, Chief Executive Officer, a Director, and important stockholder of Deposit Guaranty Bank and Trust Company. Furthermore, Mr. McMullan occupies a seat on the Board of Directors of the Jackson White Citizens' Council.

Another member of the Board of Directors of Mississippi Power and Light is Robert W. Hearin, who is President, Director and member of the Advisory Committee of the First National Bank of Jackson, and controls the second largest percentage of outstanding stock of the First National Bank. Mr. Hearin is a past president of the Jackson Chamber of Commerce and now a Director of the United States Chamber of Commerce. In addition he is a colonel on the official staff of Mississippi Governor Paul B. Johnson.

The Vice President and Secretary of Mississippi Power and Light is Alex Rogers, who was also appointed by Governor Johnson as a colonel on his official staff.

The Public Information Director for Mississippi Power and Light is Alex McKeigny, who holds a seat on the Board of Directors of the Jackson Citizens' Council.

Let's explore this further.

A scoreboard of Directors of Deposit Guaranty Bank and Trust Company would read the following way. On the Deposit Guaranty Board there is one member who sits on the Board of Middle South Utilities. There are two Deposit Guaranty Board members who sit on the Board of Mississippi Power and Light, which is wholly-owned by Middle South Utilities. There are five Deposit Guaranty Board members who sit on the Board of Directors of the Jackson White Citizens' Council. And there are two Deposit Guaranty Board members who are colonels on Governor Johnson's staff.

A similar scoreboard for the First National Bank would read this way. One First National Board member is on the Board of Mississippi Power and Light. Four First National Board members are on the Board of the Jackson White Citizens' Council. And four First National Board Members are colonels on the Governor's staff.

It's important to understand what the White Citizens' Council and Democratic Party of Mississippi believe and stand for.

In the North, White Citizens' Council supporters may talk about States Rights and Constitutional government. But in Mississippi it sounds much different. And its main purposes are to prevent Negroes from voting, to maintain white supremacy and racial segregation in all phases of life, and to squash any semblance of Negro or Negro and white organization which is concerned with making changes in the Mississippi pattern of life. The White Citizens' Councils' principal techniques are economic intimidation and political control of the state.

Following is a statement from Mississippi Governor Vardaman in 1907, which the White Citizens' Council includes in its standard literature packet available from the Greenwood headquarters of the Council.

"The Negro should never have been trusted with the ballot. He is different from the white man. He is congenitally unqualified to exercise the most responsible duty of citizenship. He is physically, mentally, morally, racially and eternally the white man's inferior. There is nothing in the history of his race, nothing in his individual character, nothing in his achievements of the past nor his promise for the future which entitles him to stand side by side with the white man at the ballot box. . . .

"We must repeal the Fifteenth and modify the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. Then we shall be able to recognize in our legislation the Negro's racial peculiarities, and make laws to fit them. This would leave the matter precisely as was intended by the father of the Republic."

At a Harrison County White Citizens' Council banquet on May 2, 1964, Master of Ceremonies Raymond Butler ended his remarks with the following statement: "Throughout the pages of history there is only one third class race which has been treated like a second class race and complained about it—and that race is the American Nigger."

Mr. Butler introduced several important Mississippians who had attended the banquet. Most prominent among them was the Chairman of the State Democratic Executive Committee, Bidwell Adam. Mr. Adam is also Chairman of the Harrison County Democratic Executive Committee.

Mr. Butler also introduced the Sheriff of Harrison County, the President of the Gulfport Port Authority and state representative Jim True, a Council member.

The guest speaker at the banquet was General Edwin A. Walker, who was introduced by Medford Evans. Mr. Evans, who holds a PhD. from Yale University is a consultant to the Citizens' Councils of America. He is also a member of the White Citizens' Councils of Texas,

Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina. Mr. Evans is Secretary of the Louisiana States' Rights Party, Coordinator of the John Birch Society and was consultant to General Edwin A. Walker at the Senate Preparedness Sub-Committee hearings when General Walker was recalled from Germany.

Mr. Evans said of the White Citizens' Councils:

"It is the only organization which recognize . . . that the key to world revolution, in which we are involved against the revolutionaries, is the racial issue. People are increasingly aware of this due to the racial extremists and our Ambassador of Intelligence in the North: Governor Wallace."

Of General Walker, Evans said:

"The most important individual in the United States is General Edwin A. Walker."

During his speech, General Walker noted that half the proceeds of the banquet would be sent to the Governor Wallace's Presidential primary campaigns.

How does the Citizens' Council operate?

A voter registration drive and boycott of white merchants in Canton this year was met with large numbers of arrests of civil rights workers and local citizens and with economic reprisals against Canton's Negro residents. The State Senator and two State Representatives from Madison County (in which Canton is located) are White Citizens' Council members. They sponsored bills making the distribution of literature concerning the boycott a crime. The white political and economic domination should be contrasted with the population figures: Madison County has 9,267 whites and 23,630 Negroes, according [to] the 1960 U.S. Census.

The Canton Citizens' Council distributed an open letter to whites in Canton, calling for their support against Negro efforts to change their way of life.

Here are excerpts from that letter:

Dear Fellow White Citizens:

. . . THE WHITE CITIZENS OF CANTON MUST BE UNIFIED IN ORDER TO SAVE CANTON FROM MASS CONFUSION LEADING TO RACE MIXING. Organization is the key to victory!

The Canton Citizens Council is the gathering place for those white men and women who are determined to keep the white people in all governmental positions and in complete control of our way of life. . . .

Thank you for your support and continued effort to keep Canton, Madison County and Mississippi in the hands of white men and women.

Sincerely,

Gus Noble  
President

We have seen some of the approaches of the White Citizens' Councils. Now let's look at the position of the Mississippi Democratic Party.

The Mississippi Democratic Party dominates the politics of Mississippi. The Republicans have only one member in the State Legislature and none in the Executive Branch or among the Congressional and Senatorial delegations. And the White Citizens' Councils dominate the Mississippi Democratic Party.

First let's look at the platform of the Mississippi Democratic party, adopted in Convention, June 30, 1960.

"We believe in the segregation of the races and are unalterably opposed to repeal or modification of the segregation laws of this State, and we condemn integration and the practice of non-segregation. We unalterably oppose any and all efforts to repeal the miscegenation laws. We believe in the doctrine of interposition as defined in the appropriate resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Mississippi at its regular session of 1956. . . .

We believe in the separation of the races in the universities and colleges, in the public schools, in public transportation, in public parks, in public playgrounds, and in all spheres of activity where experience has shown that it is for the best interest of both races that such separation be observed."

August 16, 1960, the State Democratic Party, meeting in Jackson, adopted the following measures in response to the 1960 National Democratic Convention held in Los Angeles, California.

That we reject and oppose the platforms of both National Parties and their candidates. That we reaffirm and readopt the Platform and Principles of the Democratic Party of Mississippi, adopted in convention assembled in the City of Jackson, Mississippi on the 30<sup>th</sup> day of June, 1960.

Another important measure of the Mississippi Democratic Party is the campaign literature of Paul Johnson's 1963 race for Governor. Johnson's campaign themes focused on maintaining white supremacy through a one-party system, segregation in Mississippi forever and bury the Republican Party once and for all.

Here is an excerpt from the standard leaflet which could be obtained from Johnson headquarters during the campaign:

A DIVISION OF CONSERVATIVE MISSISSIPPIANS INTO TWO POLITICAL CAMPS . . . WOULD GIVE THE BALANCE OF POWER TO OUR MINORITY GROUP. This would be the end of our way of life in Mississippi and the peace, tranquility, law and order we now enjoy in all of our communities would soon come to an awesome end.

To have Mississippi Democratic nominees and Republican nominees running for every public office . . . municipal, county and state . . . every four years . . . would constitute an unnecessary nuisance and would bring to Mississippi the same political evils and dangers that now beset such states as Illinois, New York, Michigan, Pennsylvania and California. . . . If you've already had enough of politics for 1963, then help stamp out Republicanism on November 5. Let's bury these Republican 'upstarts' so deep under good, solid Mississippi Democratic votes that it will be the year 2000 before you hear of Republican candidates for Mississippi offices again!

We do not have to belong to and participate in an integrated national party, which tolerates in its ranks radical leftists like Governor Nelson Rockefeller and Senator Jacob Javits of New York and 'Black Monday' Earl Warren, in order to cast Mississippi's electoral votes for a true conservative. We do not have to make an 'accommodation' with liberals, and we

do not have to compromise our principles, in order to make our electoral votes count for freedom.

Let's . . . bury forever these 'overnight' Republicans who would like to divide our State and hand it over to a minority group.

So we can see the themes of one-party rule and white supremacy coming through Johnson's campaign. And we can see the overlap of principles between the Mississippi Democratic Party and the White Citizens' Council.

Now let's look at how the White Citizens' Council exerts control over the State Legislature, which is strictly a Democratic Party affair.

Of the 122 members of the House of Representatives in the 1964-68 Legislature, at least 20 are known to belong to the White Citizens' Councils, including House Speaker Walter Sillers. Six of the 20 are on the State Executive Committee of the White Citizens' Council.

In the Senate, at least 10 of the 53 members are known to belong to the White Citizens' Councils, including President pro-tem George Yarbrough, who is on the Citizens' Councils' State Executive Committee.

In the 1960-64 Legislature the line-up was slightly different. There were 140 members of the House and 22 of them were known to be Citizens' Council members. And there were 49 Senators, of whom 12 were Citizens' Council members.

Another measure of Citizens' Council legislative strength is placement of Council members on committees which control key legislation.

Of the seven members on the very important Senate Rules Committee, three are known to belong to the Citizens' Council. Of the 14 members of the House Rules Committee, four are known to be members of the Council.

On the House Ways and Means Committee nine of the 33 members are known to be Council members. In the Senate, Council members hold at least four of the 13 seats on the Oil and Gas Committee, including Chairman and Vice-Chairman. In the comparable House committee, called Conservation of Minerals and Natural Resources, eight of the 29 members are Council members, including the chairman.

Another measure of the Citizens' Council importance in the Mississippi Democratic Party is Executive appointments. We've already mentioned the Governor's official staff of colonels. Colonels receive their appointments because of their support for the gubernatorial candidate during the campaign. Therefore, an analysis of the colonel staff should give some indication of where Johnson's support came from and to whom he owed political debts.

We find that Paul Johnson appointed fourteen members of the Jackson White Citizens' Council (13 of them Board members) to his colonel staff. He also appointed eight members of the State Executive Committee of the White Citizens' Councils to his colonel staff.

The State Sovereignty Commission is another place where Executive appointments are very important. The commission, which is supported by state tax money, has been the official segregation watchdog agency of the State since 1956. Its body for the 1964-68 session has not yet been chosen, but we know that at least seven of its members for the 1960-64 session were members of the White Citizens' Council.

Until the fight on the civil rights bill began last summer, the Commission had been channeling state funds every year to the Citizens' Councils in Mississippi. Now the money is used

to fight the civil rights bill. The State Legislature which had donated more than ten thousand dollars to the Washington anti-civil rights lobby, recently appropriated another fifty thousand dollars of state funds for the same purpose.

So we can see how the White Citizens' Council dominates the Executive and Legislative branches of the State Government of Mississippi. And we have seen what the White Citizens' Councils believe and stand for.

We have seen how the two leading banks and the leading electric power company, which are crucial to commerce and industry, play major roles in the Citizens' Council.

We have seen the major role electric power, finance capital and the White Citizens' Councils play in the Mississippi Democratic Party.

*"Mississippi Power Structure" was written by Jack Minnis and the SNCC research staff.*

## ***THE POWER OF THE DIXIECRATS***

By Tom Hayden

*Tom Hayden, a past President of SDS, is currently a graduate student at the University of Michigan and a research fellow at the center for the study of Conflict Resolution. This paper was first presented at the 1963 SNCC Conference in Atlanta, and then appeared as an article in New University Thought.*

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The last major stand of the Dixiecrats may be in the 1963 hearings on the Kennedy civil rights bill. Behind the wild accusations of communism in the civil rights movement and the trumpeted defense of property rights is a thinning legion of the Old Guard. How long will the Dixiecrat be such a shrill and decisive force on the American political scene? The answer requires a review of Southern history, ideology, the policy of the new Frontier, and the international and national pressures to do something about America's sore racial problem. The conclusion seems to be that the formal walls of segregation are being smashed, but the White Man's Burden can be carried in more subtle ways—as the people of the North well know.

### Dixiecrats in history

For more than a generation the democratic Party has been split deeply between its Southern and Northern wings, the former a safe bastion of racist conservatism and the latter a changing bloc of liberal reformers. The conflict is not new, and cannot be properly understood unless it is traced from the period of the New Deal.

In the 1936 election the Democratic tide was rolling. Roosevelt brought to power 334 Democrats in the House against 89 Republicans. In the Senate 75 Democrats took place against only 17 Republicans. The President's inaugural address promised the greatest liberal advances in this country: "I see one-third of a nation ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-nourished. . . . It is not in despair that I paint you this picture. I paint it for you in hope—because the nation, seeing and understanding the injustice in it, proposes to paint it out."

But Roosevelt, in trying to oust the Dixiecrat bloc from influence, could not escape the contradictions that eventually would paralyze his program. At the 1936 convention he was successful in eliminating a rule that two-thirds of the delegates must support a presidential nominee—a rule that had meant considerable power for the Southern delegations. Roosevelt's next target, an anti-New Deal Supreme Court, was less yielding. He demanded from Congress the power to appoint justices to the court within six month after the seventieth birthday of each. The Congress realized angrily that Roosevelt's intent was not merely more efficiency, but to transform the Court into a legal outpost of the New Deal. Immediately the Southern Democrats and Northern Republicans, joined by a few Northern conservative Democrats, began a clamor of opposition. The plan of court re-organization was destroyed—and in the wake, a recalcitrant Congress gained the political initiative.

By the mid-term elections of 1938, Roosevelt and Congress were stalemated, and the nation remained in the clutch of depression. Roosevelt tried to arouse the nation once more in the election campaign, often directing his vehemence against the South, but many of his liberal allies suffered defeat in House and Senate campaigns.

The overt conflict between the New Deal Administration and the powerful Dixiecrat-Republican coalition was slackened by the advent of World War II when the nation's leadership "unified". But immediately after the war the fight resumed—and reached a peak at the 1948 Democratic Convention, when the Dixiecrats walked out of the party in opposition to its liberal civil rights proposals. Harry Truman's victory over Dewey, coming as it did without the support of either the left-wing progressive movement or the right-wing State's Rights movement, seemed to signal the beginning of a more consistently liberal and viable Democratic Party. And so, as the 1949 session of Congress began, Administration liberals joined with liberal Republicans to limit the power of the House Rules Committee, a stronghold of the remaining Dixiecrat-conservative influence. Under the liberal reform, the Rules Committee was given 21 days to report out a piece of legislation—or else the chairman of the appropriate House committee could introduce the bill himself. Meant to subvert the tremendous power of the Rules Committee over legislation and the procedure of the House, the new measure was used only eight times.

In 1951, after 29 Democrats, most liberal, were defeated in House contests, the "coalition of Republicans and Southern Democrats, backed by Republican Party leaders and aided by a silent democratic speaker, restored the groups former privileges" (quoted from Holbert N. Carroll, The House of Representatives and Foreign Affairs, U. of Pittsburgh, 1958, p. 258. For the full debate and proceedings, see Congressional Record, Vol. 95, Oct. 10, 1949, pp. 15096-8.)

Republican strength grew for two years under Eisenhower, but by 1955 the Democrats were returned to congressional committee power. That power was undercut slightly, especially in the Senate, by the remarkable liberal victories in the 1958 elections. But for the most part in recent years, the conservative coalition has ruled Congress as it would a barony.

### Dixiecrat Ideology

What are the ideas and programs characteristic of the Dixiecrat establishment?

Often the term "reactionary" has been used glibly by liberal critics to cover a lack of information about specific Dixiecrat behavior which itself is usually not monolithic. In the Thirties there was a minority of Southern "planners" inspired by the National Resources Planning Board, just as today Estes Kefauver had a far different view of economic development than most of his Southern brethren.

Keeping these crucial disunities in mind, it is still fair to lump the Southerners together as conservatives—at least. On the level of political style the Dixiecrats have been known for a stifling demagoguery that kept the better parts of the Southern white conscience silent and the Negro subordinate in every area of life. On the level of issues, the Dixiecrats generally split from the rest of the Democratic Party. Based on Congressional Quarterly (30 Nov. 1962) recordings of roll-call vote splits between the Dixiecrats and Northern Democrats in 1960 and 1962, the following issue differences are clear:

Civil rights—Fifteen splits were caused in the 1962 session of the 87<sup>th</sup> Congress, 12 in the Senate and three in the House; on a constitutional amendment to ban the poll tax, on a bill to restrict the use of literacy tests by registrars, and on Thurgood Marshall's nomination for a federal judgeship. In the 1960 session of the 86<sup>th</sup> Congress, the two wings of the party split on 27 Senate roll-calls related to civil rights

Foreign aid—Nineteen splits, 13 in the Senate and six in the House, with the Southerners opposing or reducing foreign aid appropriations, and opposing the President's power to send aid to communist nations. In 1960 there were 15 party splits on foreign aid measures. Temporary



unemployment compensation, extension to other workers—Opposed by a Southern bloc when it came up in 1962. Depressed areas recovery program—Caused two Senate splits and 10 House splits in 1960. Urban affairs—The conservative coalition successfully opposed the President's plan for a new executive department to be headed by Robert Weaver, the liberal Negro administrator of the Housing and Home Finance Agency. Medical care—The coalition prevented the bill from reaching the House floor and killed it in the Senate in 1962.

Taxes—Seven splits occurred in 1962, the Senate Dixiecrats supporting tax relief for DuPont stockholders, opposing dividend withholding in the Administration's tax bill, and opposing amendments to close tax give-aways and loopholes. In 1960 the House Dixiecrats voted for a "closed rule", a procedure which prevented Northern Democrats from introducing legislation to tax corporation, telephone and passenger transportation services, and temporarily increase the national debt. Minimum wage—South and North split eight times in 1960, the South successfully voting for a minimum extension of coverage and for a wage of \$1.15 or lower against the North's proposed \$1.25 and broader coverage. Federal aid to education—In 1962 House Dixiecrats killed the President's college aid bill, and Southern Senators voted to delete scholarships from its provisions. In 1960 there were seven splits in which the South opposed federal aid. Housing—In 1960 the Dixiecrats Senators opposed increased public housing authorizations, and Dixiecrat representatives opposed urban renewal and slum clearance grants.<sup>1</sup>

These splits clarify the formal issues on which the Dixiecrats defect from the Democratic Party platform. But there is a spirit as well as a roll-call index that characterizes the Southern establishment. One must read an Eastland speech calling Chief Justice Warren pro-communist; or a Thurmond press release demanding preparation for a war of extinction; or study the hypocritical grabbing of federal funds while denouncing government spending; or merely know that these politicians are in power only because their constituents are poor, politically voiceless, and segregated—to understand the decadence holding sway in America's foremost democratic institution.

### The Base of Power

How do Dixiecrats remain in power? The answer primarily is structural, involving the political shape of the South and of the Congress.

First, until very recently almost all Dixiecrats were elected from one-party, non-competitive districts with relatively low percentages of participating voters. In these circumstances a congressman is more confident of continuous reelection if he can keep his constituents happy or simply acquiescent. Towards Negroes the treatment traditionally has been more severe. They have been excluded from the political process except in instances such as East Texas where they are manipulating by competing white power elites.

Second, although the South is quite diverse, its political representatives historically shared an ideological consensus: the need to defend "the Southern way of life". This defense required unity and, at times, conspiracy against its enemies. Thus the Dixiecrats often operate as a high-consensus, interest-conscious caucus. Their views, except on the matter of overt bigotry, converge with those of northern (usually rural) Republicans to form the bipartisan coalition.

Third, the Congressional system works to the advantage of men with tenure, and men with tenure can make sure the system is perpetuated. The key is the principle of seniority, which permits Congressmen, by virtue of their years in office, to be elevated to increasing heights in the committee structure.<sup>2</sup> "No major Western democracy rewards its politicians with so much power for so little relevant accomplishment," writes James McGregor Burns (Deadlock of Democracy,

Prentice-Hall, 1963, p. 244). At present, Southerners chair a majority of committees in both Houses of Congress, although they “represent” only two percent of the national population.<sup>3</sup> While seniority is the crucial principle, it is natural that the rest of the congressional rules structure benefits the Southern minority. Rule 22, the “filibuster rule”, makes it impossible to end debate on an issue unless two-thirds of the Senate concurs. Since Rule 22 was first adopted in 1917, there have been 27 attempts in the Senate to end filibusters (and the 28<sup>th</sup> is probably coming soon). Eleven of these attempts focused on civil rights legislation and every one failed to cut off Southern oratory. In addition to specific rules, however, the entire tradition of “senatorial courtesy” inhibits any polarization and conflict aimed at radically changing the policies and structure of Congress.

The forces which historically have held the Dixiecrats in power run deeper than those immediate support mechanisms, of course. They include the usefulness of an easily-exploited Dixieland to Northern and Southern businessmen; the structured ease with which the nation has existed without confronting its problems of racial discrimination, and so on. But seniority, rules systems, and the traditions of “the club” are the immediate pins that secure the Southern bloc.

### Kennedy and the South

What has been the relation of the New Frontier to the Southern bloc since 1960? The history shows a steady shift from uneasy fraternity to uncontrollable polarization.

It is not oversimplifying matters too much to claim that Kennedy’s 1960 election was the direct result of a sympathetic phone call to Coretta King, whose famous husband Martin was impounded in an Atlanta jail just prior to voting day. Certainly the Kennedy political machine capitalized on the event: 800,000 leaflets describing the phone call were distributed at Negro churches in Chicago two days before the election (Kennedy carried Illinois by a popular total of only 9,000 votes—and received 63.7 per cent of the heavily-Negro Chicago vote).

Richard Nixon, meanwhile, issued a “no comment” on the King incident, intensifying the conservative image he had created earlier when he repudiated Henry Cabot Lodge’s “Negro in the cabinet” proposal. For this and other reasons, Kennedy scored huge majorities in the Negro areas of the North: 64% of the city vote in Baltimore, 75% in Boston, 64 in Chicago, 71 in Cleveland, 66 in Detroit, 54 in Los Angeles, 63 in New York, 68 in Philadelphia, 67 in Pittsburgh. Both Republican leader Thurston Morton and Robert Kennedy attributed Nixon’s narrow defeat to a failure to hold the Negro voting percentages which Eisenhower secured in 1956 (Ike was supported by 36 per cent, Nixon by less than 25 percent).

Though enormously dependent on the Northern Negro vote, Kennedy was enmeshed in even deeper political debts to Dixiecrats and their allies. In his book Kennedy in Power (Ballantine, 1962), Prof. James T. Crown reports that in 1960 agreements were made with Southerners that no civil rights legislation would be backed by Kennedy in the first session of Congress and, further, promises were made of military contracts, increases in the cotton support level, and a \$100 million loan fund for the South, attached to another bill. Kennedy, who breakfasted cordially with Alabama governor John Patterson during the campaign, later appointed an old Patterson aide and prominent segregationist to the Export-Import Bank (which transacts business with “underdeveloped” non-white nations). That many other deals probably were struck is suggested by an editorial which appeared in the Birmingham Alabama Journal during the September 1962 Ole Miss crisis: the newspaper attacked the President for violating “pledges previously made to securer the Democratic nomination in 1960.”

Thanks to the South's traditional pro-Democratic instincts, disclosed and undisclosed bargains, and the active work of Lyndon Johnson and Robert Kennedy, the President carried seven of the traditional ten Southern states—but only five of them solidly. Excluding the Texas vote which Johnson personally captured, Kennedy's electoral advantage in the South was 70-43, with 14 Mississippi and six Alabama electors defecting from the New Frontier to vote as independents.

Kennedy reversed Ike's 1956 success in the South when the GOP had swept to a 77-50 advantage in the same states. But it should be noted that JFK's surplus 27 votes from the South were still a "cushion" and not a decisive edge. The President finished 81 votes ahead of Nixon and 31 votes over the necessary 269 needed for an Electoral College victory. However, the GOP addition of 22 seats in the House crippled the President's legislative chances and, presumably, made him disinclined to alienate those Southern Democrats with whom he disagreed.

The first key to understanding the Kennedy relation to the South, then, is the concept of political balance. The President was elected not just by disparate groups, but by sharply opposed ones, with Kennedy acting as the diplomat-manager of the coalition. In the first year, he sent liberal Mennon Williams to Africa but conservative Charles Meriweather to Export-Import Bank; he strolled with Martin Luther King through the White House but breakfasted with racists as well; he nominated Thurgood Marshall for a federal judgeship but sent four or more segregationists to the Southern bench.

The President is fully aware that the Dixiecrats constitute a political impediment to the success of the 1960 Democratic platform. "Some Democrats," he said at a 1962 news conference, "have voted with the Republicans for 24 years, really since 1938, and that makes it very difficult to secure the enactment of any controversial legislation. You can water bills down and get them by, or you can have bills which have no particular controversy to them and get them by."

Their power is not simply political. It is also economic—the Southern Democrats are enabled by their position to demand privileges that other regions cannot. More specifically, the Administration has seemed reluctant to tread on the interests of Commerce Secretary Luther Hodges, the only Southerner in the Cabinet. Hodges is a former governor of North Carolina and executive of the Southern Textile Manufacturer's Association, the South's most crucial—and most segregated—industry, with 800,000 operatives. Hodges record indicates little sympathy for the development of racially-integrated labor unions in the South even though they are the only conceivable means by which the Negro will obtain the economic security he desperately needs. At least for the present, Kennedy's establishment rests partially on the support of those who hold the Negro in the lowest sectors of the economy.

Two further factors are operative in the Kennedy program, however, which crucially affect his approach to the South and civil rights. One is the Cold War, which demands that in appearance at least we brush off our racism. Secretary of State Rusk calls racial discrimination the "biggest single burden that we carry on our backs in the foreign relations of the 1960's." While Cold War diplomacy dictates improved race relations on the one hand, it requires also the playing down of incidents which receive front-page attention in the African press. For the Kennedys these colliding requirements have led, externally, to displays of "vigor" with spare content and, internally, to a steady pressure on the civil rights movement to achieve its gains through the courts and negotiation.

The other factor is the evasive one of mood and style. The New Frontiersmen are young, urbane, filled with a sense of internationalism that opposes racial bigotry. But while acknowledging much of the modern world, they do not dream of a seriously better life or act on

the basis of human values. “Unlike many of the new Dealers of 30 years ago, they have no illusions about remaking America. Crusades are not their style; fanaticism is foreign to them. They are men of power who enjoy high offices because they like to run things . . . their approach to politics is manipulative and managerial,” writes William Shannon (*American Scholar*, Fall, 1961, p. 486). This mood leads to bartering with entrenched Dixiecrats and to discomfort with the spontaneity and revolutionary mood of many Negro demonstrators.

In this context, the Kennedy administration has done much more in the field of civil rights than any other government—and yet one can argue that the American race problem has grown worse in the 50’s, especially in the North, in housing, schooling, and jobs. At a time when the cumulative effects of centuries of racism are running against the “status” of America in a new world, it is doubtful that irregular and partial measures can root out the sore. Kennedy’s relations with Congress, up to this summer’s unavoidable crisis, show clearly the dismal lines of “progress”.

### Kennedy and Congress

In the first days of the 1961 session, there was a major liberal effort to amend Rule 22 to permit closure by majority, or even by three-fifths of the senators present and voting. Despite a platform pledge to “safeguard majority rule”, the President refused to side with the liberals—and the measure was buried in committee on a motion by Majority Leader Mansfield, the vote being only 50-46. “Mansfield did not bring up the issue again until the September adjournment rush was on. The Liberals’ defeat came in slam-bang order,” according to *Congressional Quarterly*, (January 4, 1963, p. 12).

The President also passed up the opportunity to support Senator Joseph Clark’s move to unseat any Democratic Committee chairman who disagreed with the platform plank related to his committee’s area of legislation, which would have robbed the Dixiecrats of their essential power.

Finally, Kennedy approved the modest course of expanding the House Rules Committee from 12 to 15 members—a move that barely succeeded and which has meant very little subsequently because of the extreme conservatism of the House. The enlarged Rules Committee in 1962 released tax and trade bills, but killed measures in civil rights, urban affairs, youth employment, mass transportation, and college aid.

In May, Senator Clark and Representative Emanuel Celler introduced a civil rights “package” especially aimed at discrimination in voting and education. Although the President had designated the two Democrats to prepare the legislation, new Press Secretary Pierre Salinger commented: “The President has made it clear that he does not think it necessary at this time to enact civil rights legislation.”

The President was vacuous in his 1962 message to Congress. “The President linked the approaching centennial of the Emancipation Proclamation with a plea for fuller guarantees of racial equality, and then made it plain he had nothing original to put forward in this regard,” editorialized the New York *Times*.

In April, two voting bills, with Administration endorsement, reached Congress. One recommended action to prevent the discriminatory use of literacy tests, and to make sixth-grade education (or its equivalent) the only requisite for registration. The other called for elimination of the poll tax requirements in the five states where they still are used.

It is a stunning comment on America that its Senate voted against the bill to prevent the racial use of literacy tests. It was filibustered to death, with Administration lobbyists expressing no essential interest. Anthony Lewis wrote in the *Times*, “President Kennedy may have wanted

the literacy bill as an abstract matter. But he said little on its behalf and did not act to make it a major public concern.” The anti-poll tax bill did pass, however, with most Dixiecrats opposing it. But its significance is small, since it will take nearly five years in ratification and only affect a few areas at that time.

After two years of waiting for New Frontier action, New York *Post* reporter Milton Viorst wrote, “Southerners, especially those in the House, voted against most key Administration programs anyway—despite appeasement on civil rights.” For example, as Spelman College Professor Howard Zinn pointed out, Georgia Senators Russell and Talmadge both voted with the New Frontier on only two of 12 key issues in 1961, and these two votes were on a non-controversial farm proposal. So it went with other Southern delegations.

In January 1963, Senate liberals again organized unsuccessfully to fight the Southern filibuster. They began a filibuster of their own early in the session, demanding a ruling from Vice President Johnson that the new Senate operates under general parliamentary rules until specific rules are adopted—which would permit a majority, instead of two-thirds, to eliminate Rule 22. Johnson, presumably representing Kennedy, ruled against the liberals, arguing that the Senate is a “continuing body” operating under its past rules. The Administration did succeed, however, in obtaining permanence for the enlargement of the Rules Committee. The price of this ambiguous achievement, however, was silence by liberals on all other congressional reforms.

Then, shortly after, the President presented his first major civil rights message, calling for several reforms which would improve the effectiveness of voter registration efforts in the South, and which would aid school districts trying to desegregate in areas hostile to integration. Although very moderate, as shown by the stronger legislation demanded by the Republican liberal leadership two weeks later, these were important proposals in the history of the New Frontier.

### Reforming the Dixiecrats?

During the entire period, the New Frontier was advancing a cautious but substantial program of reforming the Dixiecrat contingent. Through foundation contacts and Justice Department initiative it was supporting—usually with equivocation—the voter registration and direct action drives of civil rights organizations. It was prudently edging the Executive establishment out of its more glaring attachments to bigotry—hiring practices were changed, some federally-subsidized housing was covered by non-discrimination agreements, etc. It was seeking to persuade “reconstruct able” Southern officials of the need for new attitudes, and everywhere it was building contacts with and strengthening pro-Kennedy Democratic organizations in Southern states. This spring the Administration broke custom by openly trying to purge 13 Dixiecrat representatives by financing their “moderate” opponents, an action not tried since Roosevelt’s miserable failure in 1938.

For a while it appeared that the Kennedys could set their own pace, one which would be tantalizing and infuriating to integrationist and Dixiecrat alike. But their ability to do so was threatened increasingly by the civil rights movement. The government was forced, unwillingly, into situations embarrassing to itself in numerous Deep South areas. It still only took negligible action, however, even when Negroes were beaten, jailed, and sometimes killed for their efforts. But, imperceptibly at first and later with unavoidable power, the civil rights movement began producing crises which required more controversial Administration responses. The first important one, perhaps, was the entry of James Meredith into the University of Mississippi, which forced JFK into sending troops. More important, though, were the series of revolts building up to the

Birmingham crisis of April and May and followed by exploding Negro direct action in the North. History will record if these events finally burned the bridge between the liberal and conservative factions of the Democratic Party. The President was coerced into a “crash” program of mobilizing community support for voluntary desegregation, and he sent to Congress the biggest civil rights proposal to date.

### A New Era

Although inadequate in the judgment of the civil rights movement, it did contain sections which would bar discrimination in most public accommodations; further, legalize the role of the Attorney General in litigation against school segregation, and place federal voter referees in certain Black Belt counties. While calling for restraint by Negroes, however, the President did not publicly demand a change in Dixiecrat behavior. There began instead a typical flurry of private political dealing. This time, however, the Kennedy role as broker was threatened by the steady evaporation of a basis for bargaining between liberals and Southerners in the Democratic Party. Liberals, especially those with Negro constituencies, are currently pressing for more comprehensive legislation, while the Administration wants a modern bill in order to obtain Republican support for a measure the Dixiecrats violently oppose.

It now appears that the Dixiecrats have prevented the passage of a bill this session, but the consequence is the greatest tension in party politics since 1948. Inaction on civil rights will increase the militance of the Negro movement, which will, in turn, create so much disturbance that the need for federal remedial action will become all the greater. It will also increase the discontent of Dixiecrats and liberal Democrats, not only with each other, but with the Kennedy establishment.

How long can this stalemate persist? The present tension may be a symptom of the weakening, and perhaps the decline, of the Southern oligarchy. America is obviously passing into a new era of social conflict. One of the enemies, and hopefully a victim, of this transition is the Dixiecrat; for he cannot answer the question posed by a civil rights leader at the March on Washington: “Where is our Party?”

The pressures weakening the Old Guard are those: first, the voter registration and general political insurgency of Southern Negroes cannot be tranquilized. It can only spread to Northern Negro communities and spill over to create a massive social demand for full employment, housing, and school improvements.

Second, the Negro revolt takes place in the midst of a broad shift away from rural-conservative power to urban-liberal political strength which the Supreme Court’s stand on re-apportionment (*Baker vs. Carr*) is accelerating. The 1958 elections were an early and significant sign of this trend. In that year 15 liberal Democrats and three liberal Republicans were elected to the Senate, and since 1957, the Republican bloc in the Senate has been reduced from 45 to 33. In itself this trend has shifted the balance-of-power from conservatives to the moderates in the Senate. Senator Clark recently charted the path of conservative decline in a brilliant speech to the Senate. Speaking against the remaining conservative “Senate establishment,” Clark pointed out that

since 1958 the establishment has lost control of the Banking and Currency Committee, the Commerce Committee, the Committee on Government Operations, the Interior Committee, and as of Monday, believe it or not, the Judiciary Committee. They never had control of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare. They have lost control of the Public Works Committee.

Therefore time is on our side. Unless catastrophe overtakes the liberals of both parties in the election of 1964, I predict that we are within striking distance of obtaining control of the committee system of the Senate for the liberal and forward-looking elements on both sides of the aisle. (Congressional Record, 20 February 1963, p. 2530)

As Clark shows conclusively, the Dixiecrats still are over-represented on the crucial Appropriations, Armed Services, Finance, Foreign Relations and Steering Committees. But here a third set of factors runs against the old guard.

Time and seniority are running down. As William Korn demonstrates (in the new Republic, 16 March 1963, p.6):

—the senate majority now consists of 23 Southerners, 37 Westerners, 13 Midwesterners, and 13 Easterners. But 22 of the Southerners entered the Senate before 1958 while nine of the Westerners, nine of the Midwesterners, and ten of the Easterners entered since that time. Thus an attrition rate is working against the South;

—six incumbents died during the 87<sup>th</sup> Congress. Of the 17 incumbent Democrats, now 65 years or over, ten are Southerners. Of the 36 now 55 or over, 19 are Southerners.

—in 1964, when Johnson is likely to win with ease, 19 non-Southerners and only 6 Southerners will be up for re-election. If the liberals do not suffer disastrous losses in 1964, then they can look forward to the greater seniority which they will receive in the 88<sup>th</sup> Congress and to the probable setbacks for the ten Southern Democrats who must run in the harder mid-term contests of 1966.

Korns concludes: “. . . despite the prospect of some net losses among non-Southern Democrats over the next two elections, the present age-tenure composition of the Senate majority points to an inevitable shift in the pattern of seniority, with non-Southerners rising to the ranks now occupied by Southerners.”

The House is changing subtly as well. Congressional Quarterly's 1962 elections analysis showed that only 25 of 69 retiring congressmen supported the President. Of the 67 new members, 27 are expected to be supporters of the President. This is hardly soothing information for the liberal, but it does indicate that the dwindling GOP-Dixiecrat coalition will be pressed even harder to find enough allies on all issues—their hegemony is broken, if not their ability to obstruct.

While this toppling process goes on “above” in Congress, “below” in Dixieland many Democratic politicians are either reconstructing themselves or being forced into it by the Negro voter and incipient Republicanism. Young, ambitious Governor Hollins, in retiring from the South Carolina gubernatorial chair, received a standing ovation from his legislature this spring when he acknowledged that the 1954 school desegregation was the “fact of the land”. Only two Southern governors supported Ross Barnett in his “quarantine” of Ole Miss. “We believe in law and order and in the principle that all laws apply equally to all citizens,” declared Georgia’s Governor Sanders at his 1963 inaugural. The trend towards a new political fashion is clear.

Hurrying things along significantly is the development of a Republican, urban and suburban political party in the South, created largely by the influx of business professionals and aging citizens from the North. Ten years ago the Republicans were completely missing from the Southern scene. In 1961 there were nine Republicans in the House. Today there are 14, and the party plans to run candidates in every district of the South next year. They inevitably will force the Democrats to heed the lower classes and middle class “good citizens” in the urbanizing South more than the rural reactionaries. No more pungent question could be addressed President Johnson than that of I. Lee Potter, chairman of the GOP Southern political drive:

How popular will they (the Administration) be in the large urban centers of the North if they continue to accept segregationist votes? How popular will they be among Northern Negroes if they continue to imprison the Southern Negro in a one-party Democratic South?

Johnson is political, and wary of the threat which Potter outlines. It is probably no coincidence that Kennedy's political biographer, James MacGregor Burns, in his new book Deadlock of Democracy points the way to a realignment of the political parties in the near future. Dividing the liberal and conservative factions of both parties into what he calls "presidential" and "congressional," Burns forecasts that

The presidential party that first gains control of its congressional party will dominate the politics of the center-left or center-right for decades to come. (p. 339)

The current "presidential party", of course, intends to dominate. Kennedy, had he lived, might well have alienated the South as soon as November, setting the conditions for realignment. LBJ, however may postpone that inevitable day because of his traditional Southern support. However, the trend is irresistible: the Dixiecrats are outmoded. The problem now is to hasten their decline, of course, but more importantly, to ask whether the party of Wagner and Daley and Johnson is "our party".

To summarize, a review of events indicates that the present Dixiecrat bluster and filibuster on Capital Hill—no matter how influential at the moment—may be the last stand for an idea, for a political style, and for a cadre of political men whose power makes a profound mark on American history. With the Southern Bourbons on the edge of eclipse it is now perhaps time to suggest, briefly, a new agenda of problems which might be confronting the nation before very long.

Prior to any liberal rejoicing over the fall of the South, it must be seen that in nearly every instance of change today, the formal institutions of Jim Crow are being replaced by the deceit of the white commercial class. Urbanization in the South may lead to the scrapping of Negroes and other poor people into the "inner cities." Industrialization and automation, especially in the capital-starved South, may push the Negroes and poor whites still further below the lowest rungs of the economic ladder. These are matters of the immediate future in the South, but not so in the North. If I am less than enthusiastic for the new epoch, it is because I know well the North and its white snaring suburbs, its complicated barriers that never seem either up or down, its millions of insulated consciences. I see the South, in the next few years, becoming part of a nation that cares only for its images and its social peace—while millions and millions and millions live hideously deprived in the city ghettos, unable to muster quite enough political force to change their condition. In this situation, the Southern politician, shifting from Bourbon to bourbon, will become the same corrupted man of promise which the North has heard through history. The task of defeating the ultras is nearing a climax; but this may be less a reason for rejoicing than for a new wariness.

## NOTES

1 "An earlier study of 56 roll-call controversies between 1949-56 corroborates these findings and testifies to the longevity of Dixiecrat influence . . . both Southern Democrats and non-Southern Democrats are split within their ranks, but two out of three Southerners support the "conservative-isolationist" view on labor-management policy, displaced persons, taxation and revenue policy, use of treaty power, public housing, rent control, and some other economic



issues, while two out of three non-Southern Democrats will support the “liberal-internationalist,” concludes H.D. Price, in “Scale Analysis of Senate Voting Patterns, 1949-56” (Harvard, unpublished PhD thesis, 1958). Price, however underestimates actual Dixiecrat strength by not going on to point out that the two conservative Dixiecrats in every three are usually the highest in seniority and committee placement.

2 Of the 16 Senators with the highest seniority, 12 are Southerners; in the House, 66 of the top 125 are Southerners.

3 Southerners ??? 14 of the 21 Senate committees and 21 of the 18 House committees.

## ***NAZI GERMANY COMPARED TO THE SOUTH***

Nazi Germany . . .

### CURRICULUM STUDY FOR MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM SCHOOLS

Nature: The following unit consists of a description of some aspects of Nazi Germany paralleled by a description of similar features in the South both historically and at present. In particular the unit focuses on the parallel conditions of persecution and ultimately relates these conditions to the general nature of the respective systems.

Purpose:

1. The chief purpose of this unit is to bring into focus certain aspects of Negro life in the South through comparison with a historical situation which, while more extreme, nevertheless contained many similar features. In fact, the very exaggerated character of the Nazi experience should serve to bring into clearer focus an understanding of realities latent or only partially observable in Negro history and in the South today. Much valuable research which has been done on the Nazi system might be applied to a comparative analysis of the Negro in the South in order to gain greater insight into:

- a. the nature of slavery and persecution
- b. its effects on both Negro and white
- c. its relation to the Southern power structure
- d. the means by which this system can be resisted successfully and overcome.

2. In revealing certain universal tendencies in societies characterized by persecution of minority groups, the student should see that persecution and its debilitating effects on the victim can not be limited to their own race, but can involve any group of people, depending on the particular historical conditions of a society.

The tendency of so many Negro youths to accept the values of "white" (majority) culture as to their own inferiority may be overcome somewhat in this manner. In fact, the whole idea of employing a comparative study first occurred to me as a result of attending a lecture on slave revolts delivered to a Negro high school audience. The lecture was quite competent and thorough in its description of events, but the students appeared rather disappointed after it was over. In discussing the lecture later, many admitted that while they had hoped to find evidence of really active resistance on the part of slaves, instead, the white stereotypes of Negro passivity and dependence seemed to have been at least partially confirmed by evidence of so few and rarely successful revolts. I think a comparative study would be more convincing proof of, for example, the debilitating effects of a slave system on any people forced into such a system. Nor do I mean to de-emphasize heroism in Negro history which will be discussed in this unit and, I assume, in others in the summer program. In fact it would seem that a greater appreciation of this heroism might be derived through understanding of the incredible handicaps it overcame. But I think that in addition to bringing out the heroes in Negro history, an understanding of the degrading effects of institutionalised persecution on the human personality together with an understanding of the reasons for persecution, in terms of their universal applications, will more effectively help the student overcome his own partial beliefs in the old myths.

3. Another purpose is to broaden the students' knowledge of history, other peoples, and other places. Use maps if possible.

4. . . . to give the student a slight acquaintance with 20<sup>th</sup> century political realities and the relations of men in the modern world.

5. . . . as a purely academic exercise in abstract and comparative reasoning. The student may be presented with an event from Nazi Germany and one from Negro history, and asked to find a similar meaning behind two different events. Or he may be presented with an event in Nazi Germany, given the meaning behind it, and asked to think of a similarly meaningful situation in either Negro history or his own personal experiences.

6. In drawing out these parallel situations from personal experience, the student should have an opportunity at self-expression and at exposing his beliefs.

7. This unit should come close to the end of the session, providing the student with an opportunity to review previously studied material from Negro history and the Mississippi social structure by drawing parallels from units previously studied.

#### Suggested methods for teaching the unit:

1. The case-study method should be used as much as possible. Narratives and descriptions of specific cases should precede generalizations which they illustrated. It is suggested that specific events from Nazi Germany be described, followed by a description of specific events from, for example, the institution of slavery, and finally a drawing together of these two cases into a general meaning. (e.g., description of Nazi methods of arrest and transport to concentration camps, followed by descriptions of captures of Negroes in Africa, their sale to European slave-traders, Middle Passage; followed by a discussion of the effects these might have on the victims). As the unit progresses, the teacher should be able to draw on students' previous knowledge by describing the situation from Nazi history, discussing its meaning, and asking the students to think of a parallel situation in Southern politics or history.

2. Contrasts as well as comparisons should be pointed out—as, for example, the basic difference between the “legality” of the Nazi system and the “illegality” (in terms of the U.S. Constitution) of institutionalised persecution in the South today, thus providing a recourse unavailable to the victims of both Nazi persecution and U.S slavery. Similarly, the extreme difference in degree between the “closed” society of Nazi Germany and some features of a closed system which exist in Mississippi today should be kept in mind.

3. Since much of the unit deals in personality types which result from specific conditions described, role-playing by students as a means of self-expression and understanding might be used effectively (e.g., given the conditions described in the Middle Passage and sale into slavery, act out the way the victim might react at the end of this ordeal; or, given certain conditions of the poor white's existence in the South, act out his reaction to the dominant planter class).

4. The Nazi situations should always serve merely as an introduction or background against which comparable and contrasting situations in the Negro's environment are discussed, since the ultimate concern of the unit is to focus on the problems affecting the students and the movement in the South. I have devoted more space to the Nazi background in the following outline only because most teachers cannot be expected to be as familiar with it as with Negro and Southern history and politics. While some parallel cases from the latter are suggested, it is assumed that teachers will be able to draw upon their own knowledge of a more meaningful treatment of American case studies.

5. The outline described below should be thought of as suggestive only. Teachers may draw upon this information to suit their own purposes. Teachers should also be encouraged to formulate additional ideas suggested by the nature of the unit, though not directly discussed in the outline.

Introduction:

The outline should be preceded and introduced by a brief narrative of Nazi Germany in order to give the student information necessary for the analysis which follows. The narrative should be as brief as possible. The following points should be included in it:

1. The conditions in Germany surrounding Hitler's rise to power.
  - a. economic insecurity and a wide gap between rich and poor, aggravated by the 1929 depression.
  - b. political insecurity resulting from the loss of World War I and resentment over heavy reparations.
  - c. lack of meaningful democratic tradition in German political history. The democratic constitution existing at this time had been in force only since 1919 and never really had the support of the people.

(Note: you may find that the students will find the narrative more interesting if parallels to Southern history are drawn. For instance, conditions in Germany preceding this era of mass persecution were not too different from those in the South in the years following the Civil War. This drawing of parallels in the narrative may break its continuity and perhaps should not be used unless the students' interest lags.)

2. Methods by which Hitler came to power involving both political chicanery and the apparent support of a wide section of the German population.
3. The creation of a closed authoritarian society in which all citizens were forced to behave as the power structure, which, it should be stressed, consisted of a tiny minority of the population, dictated—even in their most intimate and non-political private activities (such as taste in art).
4. Characteristics of the state were a heavy emphasis on pomp, ritualism, ceremony, glorification of strength, and eventually making war on much of Europe.
5. A chief characteristic of the system was institutionalised persecution in the form of restrictive laws and of concentration camps where certain groups or members of groups were interned for the purpose of slave labor and/or extermination.
6. Various types of groups were persecuted. Chief among them were the Jews (it will probably be necessary to define this group to some extent): of 11,000,000 living in Europe at the time of Hitler's rise to power, over 6,000,000 were killed, and most of these within a four-year period (1941-45).

The narrative, in simply describing events, leaves basic questions as to the nature of these events unanswered. These questions might be drawn out from the students, each question then serving as an outline heading:

Hitler came to power in 1932—he was eventually defeated in war in 1945. For 13 years he was able to achieve and maintain absolute control over Germany (later, parts of Europe) and to carry out some of the most brutal crimes against mankind. It is estimated that he destroyed

12,000,000 civilians. What are some questions we might raise concerning the events you've just learned about in order to understand the nature of this system?

I. How were a handful of Nazis able to control and destroy millions of victims in these camps without encountering successful resistance from them?

II. How was the regime able to impose this system of slavery on its victims initially, i.e., while they were still free men?

III. Why was persecution of minority groups a policy of this regime, and why did the rest of the citizenry support or, at least, not protest against this policy?

IV. Why did the masses of citizens support Hitler's entire regime initially, and continue to support him (or not resist)?

V. From what areas was there effective resistance?

This outline may seem to be working backwards. But I think this might be the most effective way of presenting it to the students—working from a concrete example such as concentration camps toward broader questions. Thus, one ultimately arrives at the basic question made more meaningful to the student after understanding the brutality of these systems: how was the whole regime able to come into power and to sustain power? —question IV.

### Bibliography:

Almost any competent encyclopedia or text on German history should contain basic background information. One of the most interesting texts is Koppel Pinson, Modern Germany (New York: MacMillan, 1954)—particularly useful as it contains many interesting illustrations of policies. It might be consulted further in dealing with the rest of the unit.

The chief books upon which this unit is based are:

1. Bruno Bettelheim, The Informed Heart (Glencoe: Free Press, 1960). This analyses the effects of the Nazi regime upon the personality of both its victims and its subjects and its effective destruction of potential resistance.
2. Hannah Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem (New York: Viking, 1963), analyses the successful process by which the regime was able to enslave its victims, the cooperation elicited from the victims, comparisons of resistance and lack of resistance, and the nature of its supporters (i.e. Eichmann).
3. Stanley Elkins, Slavery (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1959), pp. 98-139. While the material contained here is of use only in Section I of this unit, it is most valuable since its approach is the same as that of the entire unit: it compares the institution of slavery in the U.S. to the concentration camps.

Additional books will be suggested in the section to which they are relevant.

**SECTION I:** How were a handful of Nazis able to control and destroy millions of victims in these camps without encountering successful resistance from them?

### Teaching Outline and Suggested Procedures

**SECTION I.** Information for the teacher.

The main points to be brought out in this section are:

1. The nature of a “closed” system requires total adaptation on the part of the prisoners to the demands of the system, thereby breaking all resistance.
2. Total adaptation to the demands of the system for the purpose of physical survival can result in the destruction of inner freedom, of the individual human personality.
3. Both 1. and 2. reflect the crucial importance of environment on human development regardless of prior cultural training.

A comparison of the concentration camps with the institution of slavery in the U.S. would be most useful in teaching this section of the unit (although certain features of life in Mississippi today might be drawn upon).

The application of this study to the student’s understanding of Negro history as well as more personal applications might involve the following points:

1. “innate” or prior cultural characteristics had nothing to do with the Negro’s submission to slavery.
2. Given the nature of a “closed” system, the slave revolts which did occur can be appreciated as all the more remarkable than resistance in an open society.
3. The destructive effects of a “closed” system (or of a system which tends in that direction) upon its victims cannot be overcome through cooperation with the system but rather through the tireless maintenance of inner convictions and the strengthening of these convictions by action consistent with them wherever possible.

#### SECTION I: Suggested procedure

(Note: information in parentheses contains generalizations for the teacher and should not be explained to the student until after a description of the case study.)

How were a handful of Nazis able to enslave and destroy millions of people in the Concentration camps (hereafter abbreviated as cc’s ) without encountering significant resistance from them?

Interest in this question might be stimulated by describing certain facets of cc life which would make the question a more urgent one: e.g., a few hundred SS guards were able to control hundreds of thousands of prisoners; most prisoners knew that death awaited them when their labor power was no longer effective. Therefore, why didn’t they revolt?; The Nazis successfully used prisoners for administrative functions, including the transporting of bodies of fellow victims from the gas chambers to the crematoria.

The institution of slavery may be brought up and the question raised as to why there were not MORE slave revolts.

#### A. Purpose of concentration camps and methods of achieving its purposes.

The primary purpose of the cc’s, initially , was to provide cheap labor for the Nazi regime. Later they became extermination centers. In both instances, total obedience and submissiveness was required in order for the SS men to carry out their purpose. Since, as in U.S. slavery, the requirements of the system were those to which free human beings would not voluntarily submit, and since those who ran the camps were greatly outnumbered by its prisoners, as on the individual plantations, resistance had to be avoided at all costs and obedience elicited.

Thus, an important secondary purpose of the camps as well as of the institution of slavery in the U.S. was the “deliberate infliction of various forms of torture upon human beings in such a way as to break their resistance and make way for their degradation as individuals.” (Elkins, p. 105) This was done in the following ways:

1. Initial introduction to the camp and to slavery (shock and detachment from previous life, leading to bewilderment and inability to act in a situation so totally different from anything one has known).
  - a. Description of prior culture may be brought out here showing how both Jews and Africans were products of vigorous cultures and were not culturally prone to submissiveness.
  - b. Description of the process by which Nazi victims were arrested: "The arrest was typically made at night, preferably late; this was standing Gestapo policy, designed to heighten the element of shock, terror and unreality surrounding the arrest. After a day or so in a police jail came the next major shock, that of being transported to the camp itself. It involved a planned series of brutalities inflicted by guards making repeated rounds through the train over a twelve- to thirty-six-hour period during which the prisoner was prevented from resting. If in cattle cars instead of passenger cars, the prisoners were sealed in, under conditions similar to those of the Middle passage. Upon their arrival . . . there might be sham ceremonies designed to reassure temporarily the exhausted prisoners, which meant that the fresh terrors in the offing would then strike them with redoubled impact. An SS officer might deliver an address, or a band might be playing popular tunes, and it would be in such a setting that the initial 'selection' was made. The newcomers would file past an SS doctor who indicated, with a motion of the forefinger, whether they were to go to the left or to the right. To one side went those considered capable of heavy labor; to the other would go wide categories of 'undesirables'; those in the latter group were being condemned to the gas chambers. Those who remained would undergo the formalities of 'registration,' full of indignities, which culminated in the marking of each prisoner with a number." Elkins, pp. 105-106).
  - c. Description of capture, transport, and sale of Africans into slavery (Elkins contains a brief but useful description of this, pp. 98-102).
  - d. Reaction of a person who survived to reach the destination: would he be likely to resist or be unable to act?

A general description of concentration camp life might follow here in order to provide the context in which further methods of destruction took place.

"There was a state of chronic hunger whose pressures were unusually effective in detaching prior scruples of all kinds; even the sexual instincts no longer functioned in the face of the drive for food. The man who at his pleasure could bestow or withhold food thus wielded abnormal power, for that reason alone. Another strain at first was the demand for absolute obedience, the slightest deviation from which brought savage punishments. The prisoner had to ask permission—by no means granted as a matter of course—even to defecate. The power of the SS guard, as the prisoner was hourly reminded, was that of life and death over his body. A more exquisite form of pressure lay in the fact that the prisoner had never a moment of solitude: he no longer had a private existence; it was no longer possible, in any imaginable sense, for him to be an "individual". (Elkins, 107)

Parallels from U.S. Slavery should follow.

2. Forcing of childlike behavior (Bettelheim, 131-34)

“... childlike feelings of helplessness were created much more effectively by the constant threat of beatings than by actual torture. During a real beating one could, for example, take some pride in suffering manfully, in not giving the foreman or guard the satisfaction of grovelling before him, etc. No such emotional protection was possible against the mere threat.” (Bettelheim, p. 13)

Difficulty of maintaining one's self image as an adult in the face of constant screaming threats, strict regulation of defecation, need to ask permission for anything and everything, doing nonsensical work such as digging holes and covering them up again all day, being forced to gallop like horses and sing rollicking songs.

Parallels of this type of treatment in U.S. slavery are numerous: the position of the slave child who had no real father and was totally dependent upon the master; the general treatment of slaves, even when “benevolent”, their absolute dependency upon the master for food as well as punishment.

Parallels from attitudes in the South today might be drawn upon: the significance of calling adult Negro males “boy”.

General effects: loss of self-respect in a system where there are no authorities or judges of a man (e.g. church, family, friends, school) other than the person who treats him like a child.

3. Destruction of individuality and submergence into the group (Bettelheim, 134-145).
  - a. All inmates were branded with identification numbers upon their arrival at the camp. They were henceforth referred to only by their numbers. (Explore the importance of name to individual identity.)
  - b. All orders, demands, and work involved group effort. Any person who made himself conspicuous was likely to be killed, thus creating a tendency for each to make himself as inconspicuous as possible, lest he come to the attention of an SS man.
  - c. Since each moment in the prisoner's life is involved in group activities and since he hardly had time for sleep, he had neither the time nor the energy for “free thinking”.
  - d. Individual acts of resistance resulted in punishment of his whole group, e.g. prisoners were forced to stand at attention after 12 hours of work if anyone had tried to escape until the fugitive was found. Many died of exposure under such conditions.
  - e. Of course, any successful resistance was carefully kept from the other inmates, thus further discouraging individual initiative and heroism.
  - f. Effects:
    - i. Prevent all individual behavior
    - ii. Identify with the mass for safety
    - iii. Group tends to punish individual attempts at resistance for fear of SS retaliation against the group.
  - g. Parallels:
    - i. Attempts at destroying individuality in U.S. slavery are obvious, and should be brought out.
    - ii. In addition, the denial of the individuality of the Negro is an integral feature of Southern (maybe U.S.?) life today—persecution involved his membership in a group rather than his individual personality traits.
    - iii. Examples of point e. can be found in Miss. high school textbooks and newspapers, through their omissions.



4. Destruction of the capacity for self-determination (Bettelheim, pp. 145-159).

“The question arises as to why, in the concentration camp, although some prisoners survived and others got killed, such a sizeable percentage simply died.” (Bettelheim, 147)

- a. “prisoners who came to believe the repeated statements of the guards—that there was no hope for them, that they could never leave the camp except as a corpse—who came to feel that their environment was one over which they could exercise no influence whatsoever, these prisoners were, in a literal sense, walking corpses. In the camps they were called “Moslems” . . . they were people who were so deprived of affect, self esteem, and every form of stimulation, so totally exhausted, both physically and emotionally, that they had given the environment total power over them. They did this when they gave up trying to exercise any further influence over their life or environment. . . .

“These things could be readily observed in the deterioration of moslems. It began when they stopped acting on their own. At this point such men still obeyed orders, but only blindly or automatically; no longer selectively or with inner reservation or any hatred at being so abused. They still looked about, or at least moved their eyes around. The looking stopped much later, though even then they still moved their bodies when ordered, but never did anything on their own any more. Typically, this stopping of action began when they no longer lifted their legs as they walked, but only shuffled them. When finally even the looking about on their own stopped, they soon died.” (Bettelheim, 151-153)

- b. Physical survival would seem to involve the total adaptation of the prisoner to the demands of the SS man or the master. He must act as the master requires, which really means inaction since he is not free to determine his own actions. But can one act one way and believe another? Can one maintain an inner freedom in outer bondage, particularly when he is shown no alternative?

5. Destroying potential group solidarity by dividing the prisoners against one another (p 180-192, Bettelheim)

- a. Some prisoners were given special privileges, such as an easier labor detail (working in the kitchen) as a reward for obedience. If they used this to help other prisoners (sneak food), they would lose these privileges—and possibly their lives. Thus they refused to help fellow prisoners for the sake of their own physical survival. Further, they tended to promote the efficiency of the system in order to survive physically (by adapting to demands of the system)

Parallels: House slaves, “Uncle Toms”:

- b. Some prisoners who were allowed to exercise limited power over fellow prisoners tended to enjoy the exercise of power as a substitute for their lack of freedom. (This is an important concept which should be explained carefully through the description of personality types).
- c. Hostility felt by the prisoners for the SS men could, of course, not be expressed; thus it was often directed against one another.

Parallels: I am not acquainted with the types described in (b) and (c) in Negro history—perhaps there are examples. It may be easier to find examples among some of

the more “prominent” members of the Negro communities today. Relations of poor Whites and Negroes could serve to illustrate the above two concepts (the poor White who enjoys exercising power over the Negro in part because of his own unfreedom and sense of impotence; and the poor White whose hostility over his own exploitation by the power structure is misdirected and finds outlet by violence against the only group that cannot retaliate: the Negro. (Section IV deals more thoroughly with these cases).

6. Summary: the various means by which the cc and slavery system prevent resistance by destroying the human personality might now be drawn together in terms of the following points:

- a. Definition of a “closed” system: all lines of authority descend from the master, and alternative social bases (family, friends, hobby groups, church, law) that might have supported alternative standards are systematically suppressed. The total control over life and death by a single source makes adaptation to the requirements of that source a vital necessity. (If time permits, a comparison might be drawn between U.S. slavery and slavery in South America as a means of drawing a contrast between a closed and open system. Elkins, 133-139; Tannenbaum, Slave and Citizen)
- b. By adapting to the demands of the system, the prisoner might pay the price of inner destruction for physical survival. Can one maintain one’s inner convictions when one acts contrary to them every minute of his existence? By totally cooperating with the system, the prisoner was in danger of losing his self-respect, individuality, and independence of action, as well as betraying fellow prisoners. An extreme example of inner destruction resulting from outward adaptation could be seen in a few cases where prisoners ended up by internalising the values of the SS men, hating their fellow prisoners, hating themselves, and eventually destroying themselves. A parallel example of this type was described by J.H. Griffin in Black Like Me on his first bus ride out of New Orleans. It should be stressed, of course, that this type was by no means common, but is an extreme example of the effects of the “closed” system on the human personality.
- c. “What happened in concentration camps suggests that under conditions of extreme deprivation, the influence of the environment over the individual can become total.” (Bettelheim, 147)
  - i. submission to ccs and slavery had nothing to do with prior culture or personality. Environment of cc could determine behavior of diverse individuals from varied backgrounds.
  - ii. The influence of one’s actions on one’s beliefs. When one is restrained from free action, convictions tend to weaken and disappear.
- d. Mississippi today: In what way is Mississippi not a closed system? What features of a closed system does it possess? Can you think of examples which indicate that some people have been affected by these features?

Resistance in closed systems.

Here resistance involves not only action against the system, but even the ability to survive as a human being (i.e. —more than physically) must be considered a form of resistance, given the aims of the ccs and the institution of slavery to destroy the human personality.

1. What types survived best—inner resistance—in the ccs.
  - a. Those with strong religious commitments: esp. conscientious objectors and Jehovah's Witnesses.
  - b. Political prisoners—those who felt their imprisonment was for a purpose, demonstrating their danger to the Nazi regime. This increased their sense of importance and individuality.
  - c. In general, those whose convictions, whose inner reality was strong enough so that they were never completely submerged by the environment. "... whether or not one survived may have depended on one's ability to arrange to preserve some areas of independent action, to keep control of some important aspects of one's life, despite an environment that seemed overwhelming and total. To survive, not as a shadow of the SS but as a man, one had to find some life experience that mattered, over which one was still in command." (Bettelheim, 147)
  - d. Great participation of slaves in civil war on the Union side indicates that they were more successful in maintaining their inner personalities.
  - e. It might be interesting here to bring in the situation of the POWs in Korea: Negro inner resistance to the propaganda of the Chinese was far greater than White (American) resistance. This is discussed in Seven Stayed Behind.
2. What types were able to actively resist the system?
  - a. "Once, a group of naked prisoners about to enter the gas chamber stood lined up in front of it. In some way the commanding SS officer learned that one of the women prisoners had been a dancer. So he ordered her to dance for him. She did, and as she danced, she approached him, seized his gun, and shot him down. She too was immediately shot to death." (Bettelheim, 265) Why? "isn't it probable that despite the grotesque setting in which she danced, dancing made her once again a person? Dancing, she was singled out as an individual, asked to perform in what had once been her chosen vocation. No longer was she a number, a nameless, depersonalised prisoner, but the dancer she used to be. Transformed, however momentarily, she responded like her old self, destroying the enemy bent on her destruction, even if she had to die in the process." (Bettelheim, 265)
  - b. In general the most active resistance came from those who, by virtue of their strong convictions and, in addition, by virtue of little jobs in camp administration, were able to carry on petty underground activities. For them, the SS was no longer the ONLY one. They were able to engage in meaningful activities, had alternative roles, and exercised initiative. (Elkins, 134-5)
  - c. Under slavery, those who were able to escape the full impact of slavery on their personalities were most active in resisting it. E.G., Wm. Johnson—Natchez barber; Gabriel—blacksmith; Denmark Vesey—freed Negro artisan; Nat Turner—preacher. (Elkins, 137-139)
3. Summary: What qualities are most necessary to develop in order to successfully resist—internally or externally—a system of persecution.
  - a. An awareness of the dangers of cooperation with the persecutors
  - b. The need to carve out an area of individual identity, initiative, especially in the face of attempts to reduce Negroes to a "group-status."
  - c. The maintenance of inner convictions and of the freedom to choose one's attitudes.

- d. The importance of group solidarity and rejections of divisions based on privileges or rewards.

In concerning himself with how best to overcome submission to a system of persecution, the student should be concerned further with avoiding the process by which such a system is able to develop absolute control, since resistance in a closed system is understandably rare, and indeed, usually hopeless. This could lead directly into the next section of the outline.

*SECTION II.* How was the Nazi regime able to impose this system of slavery on its victims initially—i.e., while they were still free men?

#### SECTION II: Information for the teacher

The chief purpose of this section is to explain the success of the Nazis in herding millions of people into death camps

1. in terms of their methods:
  - a. the intertwining of laws with the encouragement of criminal behavior
  - b. the gradual erosion of human rights
  - c. the use of written laws to “legitimise” their actions
2. in terms of the victims’ reactions to these methods:
  - a. cooperation and compromise with the enemy in the hopes of special or fair treatment
  - b. refusal to face reality: the maintenance of a “business as usual” attitude

Here the parallel of conditions which brought the African into slavery would be useless, since it was simply a matter of overwhelming the Africans with superior arms and force, rather than lack of resistance on the part of the Africans.

Parallels might be drawn from Mississippi conditions since Reconstruction. It is important that the teacher also draw out contrasts.

The material may be applied to the students’ own lives by the fact that methods of the present Mississippi power structure are very similar to those outlined above. The lesson, then, is to avoid the mistakes of the Nazi victims.

#### SECTION II: Suggested Procedure

A. Process by which the Nazi power structure instituted the concentration camps and the policy of extermination:

Had all this been done overnight with complete suddenness, it is likely the Nazis would have encountered massive resistance (as did the slave traders in Africa).

##### 1. Description of process

1933: law passed by state which removes all Jews from public office and makes them 2<sup>nd</sup> class citizens.

1935: Nuremberg Laws (legalizes discrimination): deprives Jews of political rights. Mixed marriages forbidden. Later, civil rights taken away.

1937: the state passes a law to sterilize all sex offenders; later the law comes to include those with “bad genes”; later the law is further extended.

1938: Krystallnacht (Night of Broken Glass): an apparently spontaneous outbreak of destruction against incurably sick persons. (It should be pointed out that the idea of

eventually exterminating Jews developed out of this euthanasia program. Arendt, p. 95)

Jews are deprived of their German nationality

Property confiscated

Transported into ghettos (this does not occur as much in Germany as in the countries she conquered).

Deportation of Jews—expulsion from Germany until Germany began conquering the rest of Europe where the Jews had fled.

Concentration camps

Extermination—began systematically in 1941

## 2. Analysis of its success

- a. The use of legality makes “criminal” acts more palatable to people once it has the sanction of a written statute. Dangerous tendency of many to accept “laws” regardless of the principles on which they are founded.
- b. The intertwining of unjust criminal laws emanating from the power structure and criminal behavior emanating from elements of society not directly related to the power structure and who correctly see these laws as encouraging criminal behavior—whether on paper or not. Krystallnacht was only one small example—thugs continually roamed the street destroying property without danger of arrest—though the Nazi power structure never openly acknowledged them. I cannot resist the parallel of Governor Wallace and the bombing of the church in Birmingham; and the absurdity of his piously decrying this criminal action. In what way was he, as governor of Alabama, responsible for this bombing?
- c. Gradualism. The state which gradually erodes human rights is more successful and, hence, more dangerous than that which attempts to destroy them suddenly—a procedure that usually results in massive resistance.
  1. People need not be aware of the principle behind each encroaching law and often don’t resist if the particular law does not affect them directly and immediately. For example, euthanasia when used on incurably ill people, is often not seen as dangerous by those who are healthy—i.e., they see in the legislation something directed against a category of people of which they are not a part rather than the principle involved in the nature of the law: the right of the state to destroy the lives of innocent human beings. Another example was the procedure of the Nazis, upon taking over a country, to divide Jews into categories of nationals (citizens of that country) and non-nationals (those who were not citizens). The non-nationals were immediately deported to ccs, the nationals only had to wear yellow arm bands identifying themselves as Jews; later they were rounded up into ghettos; eventually when the people of the country were numbed by or used to the gradual and increasing encroachment on human freedom by the Nazis, these Jews too were deported to ccs. But the effect of this categorization was just what the Nazis had hoped: the non-Jews of the country involved hardly protested the deportation of non-nationals since they were “foreigners”; and even the national Jews hardly protested—in fact, many felt lucky to have been exempted from deportation. The teacher might find it useful at this point to review some laws and bills before the Mississippi legislature: have the students pinpoint the principles (or violations of principles) behind this concept. (This exercise might also be used above

in 2a of this section). Have the students explain how, once the principle is established in law, it might tend to extend over other areas—ask for concrete examples.

2. People “adjust” to each gradual encroachment, so that the climax of such a system appears as another small law having a little more effect on their lives, rather than becoming enraged over a sudden awareness of the loss of their freedom.

Parallels from past and contemporary laws in Mississippi can be beautifully applied here. This can be done while describing the process of Nazi development or during the analysis. The student may be asked which laws described in A1 of this section are in existence in Mississippi, which are not, and of those which are not, which are based on principles which are written into law in Mississippi. I think this would be an effective way of seeing the areas of similarity and difference between Mississippi and Nazi Germany as well as the dangers latent in many Mississippi laws which, while not as extreme as certain Nazi statutes, are based on similar principles.

#### B. How did the Jews, as a whole, react to this process?

(It should be pointed out that there were many that escaped or fought back—and these will be dealt with in Section IV—but our chief concern here is to understand how so many millions were taken into slavery in order to understand how such a possibility might be avoided)

##### 1. Refusal to face reality: “business as usual”

This attitude involved not only Jews but also diverse citizens of countries conquered and subjected by the Nazis.

Many refused to see the “emergency nature” of the situation and were unable to come to terms with changing their accustomed pattern of living.

Many feared more harm would come to them if they resisted than if they kept quiet and hoped that the danger would by-pass them.

These reactions were strongest among the European middle class—both Jew and non-Jew.

Their attachment to “things” which were so much a part of their existence that they were simply unable to conceive of the emergency nature of the situation which required action, and may have required parting with their “things”—i.e., by escaping or fighting. (There would seem to be a similarity to the concentration camp inmates’ loss of inner reality; except that the middle class Europeans did not have to undergo torture in order to substitute “things” for convictions—it was often a normal part of their existence).

The resulting inertia may be looked at as the first step toward the death camps. In their still free environments, these people were reacting much as the “Moslems” reacted in a closed society.

Thus, it might be said that the social effects of most European economic systems worked in the Nazi’s favor in creating a class which could be enslaved with relative ease.

All these tendencies occurred least among the young people.

Example: Perhaps the experience of the Frank family (Diary of Ann Frank) might serve to illustrate the refusal of accept the reality of the situation, by focusing on the following questions:

- a. Why didn’t the Franks, with all their connections, attempt to leave Holland?
- b. Why didn’t they divide up the family unit, since individuals who were hidden had a far better chance of avoiding detection than did groups?

- c. Why didn't they have a gun? Had each Jew who was captured shot the SS man who arrested him, there never would have been available manpower to carry out the extent of the Nazi destruction.

(This should not be thought of as an attempt to cast aspersions on the characters of the Franks. Rather the attempt is to understand what apparently is a universally human trait: the inability to comprehend the magnitude of such an evil situation and the refusal to alter radically one's life in order to meet such a situation. Compassion and understanding should be felt).

Here, too, parallels should be drawn out—more likely in terms of middle-class Negroes in the North.

## 2. "Negotiating with the enemy."

The typical pattern which the Nazis set up for rounding up and deporting Jews involved the use of Jewish community leaders to administer these plans. (Arendt, pp. 178-181)

"Without Jewish help in administrative and policy work . . . there would have been complete chaos or an impossibly severe drain on German manpower." (Arendt, 104)

"If the Jewish people had been unorganized and leaderless, there would have been chaos and plenty of misery but the total number of victims would hardly have been between four and a half and six million people." (Arendt, 111)

Reasons for negotiating:

- a. Many felt that they would be kinder to their fellow Jews than the Nazi officers would have been, thus alleviating some of their discomfort.
- b. Many felt the Nazis would be less harsh on them if they cooperated with them.
- c. Some felt they might be able to save at least some Jews (perhaps family, friends, etc.) if they cooperated in helping to round up the rest of the Jews—this, they felt, would be better than having ALL Jews of the particular community exterminated.
- d. Those who felt that if the Jews tried to escape they would be shot, while in the concentration camp there was at least a chance for survival. Thus, many of the Jewish leaders who loaded their fellow men into cattle cars never told them of their destination in order to avoid panic.

Actually, 50% of those who did escape were killed, while 99% of those who did not escape were killed in the ccs. One can only speculate what might have happened on a train containing several thousand prisoners and a few hundred guards had the prisoners known the true nature of their destination.

Parallels from among Negro leadership—past and present—can be drawn upon. These are obvious and can be left to each teacher's ingenuity.

## C. Summary discussion: given the authoritarian features of life in Mississippi, how can we (the Movement) best avoid the successful encroachment by the state on human life? How can we avoid the mistakes made by the victims of Nazi system?

- 1. Understand the principle behind laws: differences between the legality of a statute and the justice of a principle.

2. The importance of actively resisting even the smallest violation of principle—even if the particular violation has no direct and immediate application to you.
  3. Inaction due to fear of the consequences of resistance only encourages persecutors to extend their actions in full confidence that they'll encounter no resistance. It is, for instance, doubtful that Hitler would have thought of implementing a systematic extermination of a people in 1933. By 1941, however, he had seen the continued lack of effective resistance and had no fears of arousing massive protests by establishing death camps.
  4. Cooperation with persecutors similarly encourages their criminal actions. Your expectation that they will repay you in kind for your cooperation assumes that they act under a concept of justice or fairness. Such, of course, is not the case: witness their laws.
- Discussion of cooperation vs. militancy.
5. Importance of possessing the ability to alter your life to the demands of the situation—awareness of danger of becoming tied to things rather than to principles.

The above points should be drawn out from the students in terms of what they learned from this section as it might be applied to their personal lives as well as to the Movement. Get them to formulate these points themselves by going over with them examples from the section.

*SECTION III:* Why was persecution of minority groups a policy of this regime, and why did the rest of the citizenry support, or at least not protest against this policy?  
(This section can be impossibly vast—only a few points are suggested.)

A. Economic—man as commodity

1. Examples: cheap labor of concentration camps  
confiscation of property of victims  
slavery: cotton  
Mississippi today.
2. Why must the desire to exploit a group economically be accompanied by persecution of that group?
  - a. To deter resistance against a system to which no one would voluntarily submit.
  - b. In order to justify transforming man into a commodity, it is necessary to convince the rest of the populace that he is “less human” than the exploiters. This may serve to allay feelings of guilt and would also assure the rest of the populace that they are in no danger of being used as commodities since they are “human,” “superior”, etc.

B. As a common denominator to unite a people under a single power, by the use of a scapegoat.

1. Germany in the thirties may be compared to the South after the Civil War.
  - a. 1929 Depression—economic destruction wrought by Civil War.
  - b. Bitterness over having lost WWI—Civil War and military occupation.
  - c. Lack of democratic tradition
  - d. The economic systems in both cases were characterized by a great gap between rich and poor and a consequent division of society into potentially antagonistic classes.



Both societies thus were characterized by division and insecurity. Only through the use of a scapegoat could the people feel:

1. A sense of unity based on a “common enemy”
  2. A sense of superiority much needed by a people degraded by war and economic ruin.
- The real conflicts could be hidden by this crusade against a common enemy, to the point where the power structure could convince the weakened populace to act against their own economic interest (and to the advantage of the power structure. See Jamie Whitten tractor deal, and Lillian Smith, *Killers of a Dream* (New York: Anchor, 1963), pp. 154-168: “Two Men and a Bargain”

C. The creation of a “common enemy” could be used by the power structure as an excuse for assuming more power over the entire populace, i.e., we need more power in order to deal effectively with this internal danger.

1. This can be seen by both the Nazis and the South’s imbuing the persecuted group with dangerous attributes:

- a. Nazis claimed Jews were international bankers interested in destroying the world for international communism.
- b. Southern politicians claimed that the Negro was a violent savage, “raping our white women.”
- c. J. Edgar and the Communists, concerning present movement.

Therefore the state is able to get public support for laws designed specifically to protect society against a particular group—actually these laws give the state power to apply them to other groups.

Review the notion of law and principle dealt with in Section II as well as specific examples of laws from that section.

D. Use of persecution by power structure to oppress the entire society. Promote fear that any action not in line with the dictates of the power structure is evidence of supporting the “enemy”. Human actions become more and more limited since the state aims to destroy all areas of free thought in order to assure itself of absolute control (see example below on regimentation in art).

Process in Nazi Germany: (Bettelheim, 272-282)

1. Intimidation from below—encouraging youth to report suspicious behavior on the part of their parents.

2. Punishment of a cross-section of groups:

Hitler punished a cross-section of a group of artists who were opposed to his regimentation of cultural activities and his banning of “decadent” art. Many of the imprisoned artists had nothing to do with the opposition movement. This was quite intentional: all artists were terrorized by this action and were discouraged from even associating themselves with any organization for fear that it might eventually be considered “subversive”. Thus, the existence of organizations within the system was discouraged, promoting the development of a thoroughly closed society where all authority emanated from a single source.

3. Eventually this led to the destruction of whole groups whose existence involved loyalties outside or additional to the state. The first such group to be so destroyed were the gypsies.

4. Random terror. Unorganized efforts at independence of thought and action were also punished. Those who listened to foreign broadcasts, “mutterers,” those accused of miscegenation and homosexuality, were denounced and punished WHETHER OR NOT they had actually been involved in any of these activities. The message was clear: denunciations, arrests at night, rumors of horrible punishments all tended not only to discourage any action which the citizen might anticipate to be subversive, but further it produced a tremendous “self-conformity” on the part of the citizenry to the wishes of the state.

Thus a basic relationship between an authoritarian system and persecution as a policy becomes evident: persecution is used as the chief and most effective means of achieving a closed system.

I think many parallels to this process can be drawn from the South today. The contrast, of course, is vital: LEGALLY the government is not a closed system: a citizen of Mississippi has rights as a citizen of the United States. But the fears on the part of the citizenry of deviating from “Southern tradition” has tended to create in much of the South more and more features of a closed system.

Speeches of Southern political leaders denouncing those who disagree with their policies as “Nigger-lovers”, “Communists”, “left-wingers” etc. and linking them all together, has tended to produce a submissive body politic in the South.

Numerous examples of legislation: the attempt to outlaw the Republican party, for one.

See Lillian Smith, Killers of the Dream, for cases of oppression throughout the white South and their links to the persecution of the Negroes.

*SECTION IV: Why did the masses of citizens support Hitler’s entire regime initially, and continue to support him (or not resist)?*

SECTION IV: Suggested procedure:

Why did the masses of citizens support Hitler’s regime originally, and why did they continue to support him? (Parallel question for the South should also be raised.)

(Much of this will consist of summing up points dealt with previously and thus should provide a summing up of the unit. It should further provide the students with greater insights into White society in the South.)

A. Many of the factors which encouraged a society to accept persecution of a minority group also encouraged them to support an authoritarian government, e.g. conditions described under III. B. could also result in the desire for a strong leader to identify with as a substitute for one’s own feeling of insecurity and weakness. W.J. Cash, The Mind of the South, brings this point out in the relation between “crackers” and planters as one of identification (of the former with the latter) rather than antagonism or envy. Points made in III. C. and III. D. would, of course, enable the state to appeal to the populace for more power to deal with the “enemy” and would subsequently enable the state to subdue any and all opposition.

B. Factors which “lulled” the victims into an unawareness of the extent of danger from the regime (Section II) also worked to prevent the average citizen from becoming fully aware of the nature of this system (at first): e.g., “legalism” intertwined with

“spontaneous” criminal behavior and a gradual erosion of human rights. Since the initial actions seemed to be directed against the persecuted group, the rest of the population was even less aware of the dangers than were the victims of these actions.

C. Finally, once the system is set in motion, its effects on the populace serve to increase the authoritarian tendencies of the system and submissiveness of its citizens—it becomes, in other words, self-perpetuating. In this sense the entire system can be looked at as a macrocosm of the concentration camp (Section I).

1. The terror created by conditions described in III.D. would tend to promote among the populace the attitudes of apathy; inaction; a refusal to believe the reality of a system to which one belongs, yet which is morally indefensible, but one which the citizen feels unable to resist. Examples: Many Germans refused to believe in the existence of death camps though they lived only a few miles from them; many Southerners refuse to believe Negroes are unable to vote—they want to believe they are too lazy to bother or too illiterate to qualify.

In extreme cases, many attempted to cover up their terror and their fear of non-conforming to the demands of the state by internalising the values of Nazi ideology—become a “better Nazi than the Nazis” for the purpose of self-preservation. Examples of all these types can be found in Miss. today—see Lillian Smith; student’s own experiences and observations of white society. The dangers of outward adjustment and compromise created by fear of resistance and resulting in a genuine internalisation of the values of the system might be made meaningful to the students through role-playing.

Thus, the entire society is as unfree in both thought and action as are the inmates of the cc’s.

Integration of personality depends on consistency of belief and action—in a closed system, therefore, one must change one’s beliefs or resist actively the system.

2. The loss of individual responsibility and submergence into the mass.

- a. One can remove oneself from the need to understand a system which one feels powerless to resist and which one cannot defend morally by hiding behind the mask of being anonymous and of obedience to the group.
- b. Eichmann was an excellent example of this type of thinking: “He had consoled himself with the thought that he no longer was ‘master of his own deeds,’ that he was unable to ‘change anything’.” (Arendt, Eichmann, p. 121)
- c. A similar example was the defense by a German general of his support of the Nazi regime: He claimed it was “not the task of a soldier to act as judge over his supreme commander. Let history do that or God in Heaven.” (Arendt, p. 133)
- d. Southern (and Northern) protests of innocence and lamentations of “What could I do?” are numerous enough to provide many parallels.

Class discussion should bring out the debilitating effect this has on one’s powers of judgement, independence of thought, and self-respect.

3. Another effect is that guilt over the injustices perpetrated by a state to which one belongs may result in increasing that person’s prejudice against the group (against which the injustices are perpetrated) because:

- a. the need for ideological reinforcement of a social structure to which one is committed. Hence, the treatment of the Negro is justified by assuring oneself that “he is biologically inferior”, in an attempt to dispel one’s sense of guilt.
- b. People tend to resent those who make them feel guilty: Example: the following is an experience recounted by a young girl living under the Nazi regime: “The girls in her school were asked to take a census of the population one day. To refrain from taking part would have meant risking the well-being of herself and her family. Moreover, the request seemed innocuous enough. But in taking the census she suddenly found herself having to ask for private details from a Jewish family. She realized that these Jews saw her as a symbol of the regime and hated her. She resented this, and then realized that she was feeling just as the regime wanted her to: resentful of Jews.” (Bettelheim, 292-3).

4. “The more absolute the tyranny, the more debilitated the subject, the more tempting for him to ‘regain’ strength by becoming part of the tyranny and thus enjoy its power.” (Bettelheim, 294).

- a. This concept is similar to the idea of identifying with a powerful state out of a sense of one’s own impotence resulting from insecure economic and political conditions. But the more one supports such a state, the more power it acquires over the individual, which further increases his initial sense of impotence and anonymity. And this, finally, serves to increase his initial identification with a powerful state.
- b. Thus the pomp, display, and ritualism of the Nazi regime—together with its expansionistic policies—served an important function: they served to attract its citizenry who could become involved in a mass demonstration of power as a substitute for their own lack of personal autonomy.

Parallels of this can be seen in the symbols associated with “Southern tradition such as the massive and elaborately gauche ante-bellum houses, the recounting of the grand exploits of the Confederate army, the glorification of duelling, and a general glorification of violence. It is significant of course that a very small fraction of Southern society has ancestors who partook of these grand symbols, and even fewer are alive who can remember these past glories. Yet all identify with it and glorify it to the point of insanity: e.g. the ritual pilgrimages to the ante-bellum mansions as well as the exorbitant amount paid to restore and maintain them. (see Lillian Smith)

- c. In a peculiar way the victim of such a system is more fortunate than the rest of its citizens in escaping this identification with tyranny. For while he is often reduced to a position of impotence by the system, he is of course explicitly excluded from identifying with it. There are exceptions (See Section I.A.6.b.), but on the whole, they have escaped this identification.
- d. Basic points to be brought out from this section:
  - 1. The authoritarian character of Southern society; those features which are characteristic of a “closed” system.
  - 2. An understanding of the position of poor whites
    - a. in their identification with the power structure which continues to exploit them,
    - b. in their acts of violence committed against the Negro,

- c. both instances indicate the extent to which they are unfree, insecure, and oppressed resulting in a need to identify with power and violence.
- 3. Advantages derived by the power structure in the South from the system of discrimination:
  - a. A means of increasing the power of the state over all its citizens.
  - b. A means of directing the poor white away from normal economic self-interest by directing his attention toward controlling the Negro and by the substitute gratification of allowing him to feel superior to the Negro.
- 4. General attitudes resulting from the authoritarian character of Southern society tend to perpetuate the system of discrimination by means of
  - a. apathy resulting from fear and oppression,
  - b. denial of realities which one feels powerless to change
  - c. Guilt together with the inability to act in order to remove the evils which create the guilt result in resentment toward the source of guilt.

In addition to gaining the insights into the authoritarian nature of Southern society and its effects on both its explicit victims and its general populace, it would seem most important that the student tie together this unit by “learning from the past”—that is, through his understanding of the workings of this system, he should be able to prescribe areas of action whereby he can successfully overcome it.

The dangers of a “closed” system have been made clear. How then does one successfully resist a system which has features of this “closed” nature? Areas already discussed in this unit provide some clues to action, but chiefly in a negative sense—e.g., one should NOT compromise with persecution in the hopes that one’s own position will remain secure; or the importance of maintaining one’s inner conviction is crucial in order to maintain one’s freedom and avoid subjection.

A final section, dealing with concrete case studies of resistance would supplement previously discussed prescriptions for action which have been studied only on a hypothetical level.

#### SECTION V. *From what areas was there successful resistance?*

(I have chosen the resistance of the Danish people because it seems to contain many lessons; it illustrates the successful carrying out of actions discussed hypothetically in the previous sections; and it contains many features from which parallels in the Movement today can be drawn; it was perhaps the most dramatic example of successful resistance to modern tyranny.)

A. The Story of the Danish resistance should be preceded with a brief general account of Hitler’s military conquests in Europe. Chief points included would be:

- 1. the policy of gradualism was followed in achieving total subjection over the conquered nation and, in particular, in exterminating its Jewish citizens:
  - a. forced to wear yellow arm bands
  - b. moved to ghettos
  - c. confiscation of all property

d. deportation to extermination camps

2. As part of this gradualism, the policy of dividing the subjected people against each other was followed: initially the non-Jews were appealed to for support against the Jews; the Jews themselves were divided against one another by creating a distinction between nationals and non-nationals (i.e., those who were citizens of the country and those who were refugees), then eliciting support from the “Nationals” for the policy of deportation of “non-nationals” by assuring the “nationals” they were in a privileged category. (Eventually, of course, they too were deported.)

3. The general effect of the populace of each subject country—including both Jew and Non-Jew—was similar to the effect of the system within Germany:

- a. many people felt safe by the persecution of another group
- b. many were lulled into an unawareness of the gradualism employed until it was too late.
- c. many hoped that, by belonging to a “privileged “ category, they would escape the fate of others.
- d. a general atmosphere of fear and terror caused most to remain apathetic. This attitude was most typically expressed by thousands who, when later asked why they remained silent during these criminal actions, why they didn’t resist them, replied: “What else could I do?”

Bibliography for Danish resistance:

Harold Flender, Rescue in Denmark (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963). Most thorough and detailed account.

Hannah Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem pp. 154-158, contains a brief summary of the Danish resistance together with an interesting comparison of reactions in every country occupied by the Nazis.

B. Narrative of Danish resistance:

1. Invaded by Germany in 1940—no resistance—had made no military preparations to protect itself against German invasion.
2. Active resistance begins only when the Nazis propose to introduce anti-Jewish measures. This elicits a firm refusal on the part of the Danish government, and people to compromise even with small gestures of discrimination. When the Nazis proposed having Jews wearing yellow armbands, they were told that the King of Denmark would be the first to wear one. Government officials announce that ANY anti-Jewish measures would result in their resignation from office.
3. Refusal of the Danes to allow distinction between Danish and non-Danish Jews. Since Germany had declared German Jews stateless, the Danes claimed that the German government no longer had any jurisdiction over the ones who had fled to Denmark.
4. All these open declarations of protest against proposed anti-Jewish measures served to bolster the morale and resistance of the Danish Jews.
5. Nazis postponed action against Danish Jews until 1943, by which time the German officials who had been in the country for three years, were “no longer the same”. Nazis prepared the night of October 1, 1943, for the secret arrest of all Jews in Denmark. Danes were secretly informed of this by a German official in Denmark; they contacted all Jews they

- knew, told them the information, and offered them hiding places in their own homes. Out of 7,800 Jews in Denmark, the Nazis were able to find and arrest only 477. The rest were hidden in Danes' homes, most of them with people they didn't know.
6. The more than 7,000 Jews ultimately escaped to neutral Sweden via the voluntary services of the Danish fishing fleet which risked death three times a night in helping the Jews escape. Danes paid costs of those who could not afford it. Among the Danes, the hiding of Jews and helping them escape to Sweden was a completely open matter: Danes would walk up to one another in the street to openly solicit aid: tacit assumption that resistance was the NORMAL and typical course of behavior.
  7. As a result of the murder by Nazi officials of a small band of this resistance movement, every single worker in the city of Copenhagen staged a mass general strike. When the Nazis retaliated with violence, every city in Denmark joined the strike. The strike was ended only when the Nazis granted concessions involving release of political prisoners, removal of Nazi officials from public offices, etc. other acts of resistance were: Sabotage against factories—2,548; 2,156 acts of sabotage against railroad installations, which resulted in Nazi supplies arriving two weeks behind schedule during the Battle of the Bulge.
  8. Meanwhile the Danes continued to apply pressure to the Nazis in protest over the arrest of the 477 Jews, as a result of which the Nazis sent them to a "special" camp for important prisoners and allowed delegations from the Danish Red Cross to make periodical inspections at the camp. Danish citizens and government leaders sent periodical shipments of good to the Jews at the camp. The effect of this concern on the morale of the Jews interned in the camp was tremendous. The knowledge that people outside cared about them increased their determination to resist. Only 48 died during the course of the internment—most of them from old age.
  9. Toward the end of the war. The Danes as a result of constant protests and pressure acquired from the Nazi government permission to have the Jews in the camp shipped to neutral Sweden (the camp was in Germany). The trip was made via Denmark by bus, and the following events greeted travellers as the bus entered Denmark:  
 "Just beyond the frontier, the prisoners saw an incredibly stirring sight, a sight that was to be repeated with each town that they passed through on their way to Copenhagen—thousands of Danes of all ages were lined up along the road, waving Danish flags and joyously shouting, "Welcome to Denmark!" . . . Suddenly the crowds lunged forward and surrounded the buses, forcing them to stop. While continuing to wave their Danish flags, to throw kisses and to chant, the people passed through the open bus windows bouquets of flowers, boxes of candy, chocolates, cigarettes and bottles of milk. The passengers were overwhelmed . . . Throughout the long drive to Copenhagen, the roads were filled with Danes joyously welcoming home their fellow countrymen."  
 (Flender, p. 251)
  10. After the war, the 7,000 Jews returned to Denmark, and most found their apartments freshly painted, food in the refrigerator, etc. Fellow Danes had kept their businesses going for them and had deposited the profits in banks for them; some Jews even found that their plants had been watered while they were in Sweden.

C. Analysis (in analysing each of the following points, the teacher can draw upon literally hundreds of parallel case studies from both American history and the movement today that serve as further illustrations of the points to be discussed):

1. Resistance came about on moral grounds. For three years the Danes lived quietly under Nazi rule, but once persecution began, it encountered total and unanimous resistance. “What else could I do?” was the most typical answer given by Danes when asked why they risked their lives to help the Jews.
2. Refusal to compromise with even the smallest crimes. They drew the line firmly and immediately (e.g. yellow arm bands).
3. Solidarity. All were involved; no fear about trusting anyone with your plans; thus all were able to help each other and effectively shipped 7,000 Jews secretly to Sweden. Solidarity further made active resistance effective—the Nazis could not retaliate against a whole nation, though they could have retaliated against individuals or small groups. Nazis had to give in to general strikers not out of consideration, of course, but out of fear of open revolt of the ENTIRE people. Solidarity also was indicated in the refusal of all to accept any divisions or privileged categories—refusal to allow distinction between Jew and non-Jew.
4. Willingness to act quickly even at the risk of death, to upset their whole way of life in order to help their fellow countrymen. Awareness of the extraordinary nature of the situation rather than the security of “business as usual.”
5. Role of the Danish power-structure, a leading element in the resistance: King, Church, businessmen, parliament (cf. The role of John Adams in the Amistad incident)
6. Demonstration of “the enormous power potential inherent in non-violent action and in resistance to an opponent possessing vastly superior means of violence.” (Arendt, p. 154)  
For instance:
  - a. King declares himself prisoner of war
  - b. Underground newspapers,
  - c. Danish navy dissolves and sinks its ships rather than be used to increase the strength of the Nazis
  - d. Effect on Nazis: prior to the arrest of the Danish Jews, one of the Nazi officials in Denmark tried to discourage the German government from the planned deportation, saying that “some of the German soldiers had even become ‘infected’ by the atmosphere of racial and religious tolerance in Denmark and might not be willing to cooperate in drastic anti-Semitic measures.” (Flender, p. 29) German informers who revealed secret arrest plans to the Danes were an example.
7. Why did the Danes react so heroically when no other peoples had?
  - a. Personal answers (given by various Danes)
    1. “It was exactly the same as seeing your neighbor’s house on fire. Naturally you want to try to do something about it.” (Flender, p. 56)
    2. “Even under serious or desperate conditions it is often a happy feeling to be able to devote oneself to a cause that one feels convinced is both unconditionally just and absolutely binding.” (Flender, p. 71)
    3. “We helped the Jews because it meant that for once in your life you were doing something worthwhile. There has been a lot of talk about how grateful the Jews should be to their fellow Danes for having saved their lives, but I think that the Danes should be equally grateful to the Jews for giving them an opportunity to do something decent and meaningful.” (Flender, p. 144)



b. Social and historical conditions in Denmark

1. Danish Jews were the most assimilated group of Jews in Europe.
2. Power structure had traditionally provided moral leadership
3. Historical traditions—One of the first Western countries to declare racial discrimination illegal (1814).

One of the world's oldest democracies with the emphasis on equality as well as freedom:

1. Education through the university is free for all citizens; illiteracy is non-existent
2. Leader in social security; unemployment insurance, workmen's compensation; socialized medicine; old age pensions;—for ALL citizens—long before World War II.

*“Nazi Germany” was written by Chicago Law School graduate and SNCC organizer Aviva Futorian (Personal communication to the editors, June 25, 2004)*

### ***PROBLEMS RELATING TO UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE VICINITY OF HAZARD, KENTUCKY***

The economy of Perry County and of South Eastern Kentucky generally has been in a process of almost continuous decline since 1948. In that year Perry County coal production began an uneven, but definite, decline, and employment in Perry County reacted in a steeper and ever more uncompromising regression. The economic effect of these declines on the area can be measured in many ways. Probably the two most revealing are the change in total employment and the heavy migration of the region's population. In Perry County there are 6000 fewer jobs today than 15 years ago a decline of almost two-thirds in the total work force. In the ten years between the 1950 and 1960 census reports, over 20,000 people migrated from the county reducing the population by a full quarter.

Migration, as rapid as it has been, has not kept pace with the declining job market. Unemployment in the area of Hazard, Kentucky has been in the "substantial and persistent labor surplus" category since the early 1950's. Many of the unemployed have long since exhausted their unemployment benefits. State figures indicate exhausters have been occurring at a high rate in Perry county since the State Bureau of Economic Security began keeping records in 1955 (see chart I).

Chart I

State Unemployment Insurance Exhausters  
Hazard Employment Security Area (7)  
for the month of September

Year	Number of Exhausters
Sept. 1955	80
Sept. 1956	23
Sept. 1957	68
Sept. 1958	189
Sept. 1959	134
Sept. 1960	48
Sept. 1961	129
Sept. 1962	48

Source: Research and Statistics Service, Kentucky State Bureau of Economic Security.

The picture is not much brighter in the non-industrial segments of the economy. The area surrounding Hazard is unsuitable for all but small family farms which have also been declining in number and productivity. Employment in all sectors except manufacturing and coal mining has either grown slowly or has remained constant over the period covered by the table. In the manufacturing and mining segments, however, employment has declined precipitously. The largest decline in employment has clearly been in the coal industry; job losses in this single industry total more than current employment in all industries. The role of coal mining in the creation of long-term unemployment is confirmed in a survey made by the Kentucky State Unemployment Bureau. Miners made up 17.8% of the total new claimants for unemployment

compensation and 25.8% of the benefit exhaustees, indicating the prominence of coal mining in Kentucky's long-term unemployment problems.

The failure of the other segments of the local economy to absorb the workers released from the coalmines has created a pool of surplus workers. The only drain for this pool has been continuous migration of workers from the Hazard area. Because migration has not been possible in a great many cases, substantial unemployment has persisted in the Hazard area to the point of becoming a way of life.

These unemployed and partially employed workers are responsible in large measure for the low median income of Perry County. While the median family income of the United States is \$5,660, the median in Perry County is \$2,689. This comparatively low median income is indicative of the approximately 20% of Perry County families who have incomes of under \$1,000 a year as compared with the 5.6% of such families in the national population.

In a nutshell, the problem of Hazard, Kentucky, is a consistently high rate of unemployment with few prospects for a reduction in the near future.

The unemployed of Hazard are difficult to define. Depending on what is meant by unemployment, local estimates run anywhere from 5% to 50% of the total work force. However, in Hazard it is not the current figures pertaining to unemployment that are significant. The migration of workers over an extended period of time has kept the number of unemployed, as well as the rate of unemployment, within a reasonable order of magnitude.

In order to appreciate the extent of the unemployment problem in the Hazard area, it is necessary to look at employment in its historical perspective. According to the Bureau of Economic Security's statistics, fifteen years ago there were 97,000 jobs in Perry County; today there are about 3,700.

Like all such statistics these figures fail to take into account the problem of underemployment and, in the case of Hazard, changes that have taken place in the quality of jobs available. In the first case, the number of people employed in jobs which provide irregular employment or abbreviated work years is greater in Perry County than for the country as a whole. In the second case, even though some workers have found alternate jobs, the substitute jobs are frequently inferior to their normal work in both pay scale and working conditions. In this group are those workers formerly employed by one of Perry County's large unionized mining operations who after layoff found new work in small non-union truck mines. The pay scale on these jobs was lower and the working conditions inferior to their former employment. These small operations present other obstacles to the statistical analysis of the Hazard employment picture. The above figures do not include those hired by operations not paying state unemployment insurance taxes. These firms have avoided taxation either because their operations are so small that they do not fall within the statutory requirements, or because they are simply violating the law. The problems would be picayune were it not for the important role that the small truck mine has played in the changes taking place in the Hazard economy. Probably the most pressing problem arising in connection with unemployment has been the substitution of small truck mines for the capital-intensive rail mines. This change has meant a change not only in the physical operations of the mines but in their ownership and financing as well. Whereas the mines that typified the "prosperous period" in the Hazard area were large stock corporations easily negotiated with by the union and able to pay high wages, the new owners are small entrepreneurs who operate on small and therefore closely watched profit margins.

The owners of such firms make it a mark of pride to have avoided unionization and their small size and great number make them difficult targets for union organization. Although the owners of the truck mines represent only a small capital investment, it has not meant that the truck mining operations were necessarily less efficient users of labor than their capital-intensive counterparts. The growth of the truck mining industry has depended on this fact. The small mines have compensated for the obvious drawbacks of size and inaccessibility in three ways: 1) rental of mining machinery from the former large mines; 2) piece rate wages; and 3) reduced crews. That efficiency which the truck mines lack, as well as the marketing disadvantages of small operations, is made up for by the competitive labor market. While minimum wages are fixed by union contract in the large mines, wages in the truck mines know only the law of supply and demand. It is interesting to note that the operators themselves do not feel that they have any power to fix wages lower than the prevailing scale, and in this respect indicate a tacit acknowledgement of the competitive conditions at work in the industry. This very competitive supply market coupled with a falling demand for coal has resulted in a low wage level for many of the employed miners in the Hazard area. Wages as low as three dollars a day have been cited and the Wage and Hour Division of the U.S. Department of Labor has filed civil actions against three coal operators for violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act and has started an administrative proceeding under the Walsh-Healy Act. Similarly, civil actions are being pressed against coal operators in the surrounding counties; four in Harlan County, three in Letcher County, and one in Knott County.

The low wage level in conjunction with the relatively high rate of labor efficiency maintained by the truck mines has placed them at a competitive advantage over the larger rail mines. Of the twenty-seven unionized rail mines in operation in Perry County during its post-war "prosperity period" only one is left. It is able to continue production only because it has introduced the most efficient mining methods into its operations. In the last three years the company has invested more than one and a half million dollars in capital equipment.

The other unionized rail mines of Perry County have fallen by the wayside. Much of the blame for their closing may be placed in an economic if not moral sense at the door of the United Mine Workers of America. It has been the policy of the UMWA since the early 1940's to maintain high wages in the coal industry while maintaining high profits for the operators by 1) standardizing coal wages throughout the county, and 2) increasing the productivity per man hour by encouraging the introduction of machinery. This policy is meant to reduce the number of firms in the industry and weed out those mines which could only remain competitive by holding down wages and short-cutting on safety measures. The union has recognized that such measure would inevitably reduce the number of men working in what John L. Lewis considered a dirty and dangerous trade. The result has been that Fortune magazine has seen fit to label John L. Lewis "the best salesman the machinery industry ever had."

John L. Lewis' concept of the coal industry broke down because its solution for unemployment problem rested on the continuous prosperity of the rest of the economy. Unfortunately declines in output and employment in the other basic industries have resulted in a situation where "no longer can the young men of the mining industry go into the steel industry to get a job, or the auto industry to get a job, or the ship building industry or any other industry and hope to get employment." The former miners have been trapped in the areas of their former jobs.

The situation in Perry County at present is one that it seems certain was not envisioned by John L. Lewis. Instead of fewer firms, there are more; instead of wages being stabilized at a high level, they have fallen. While the number of men working the coalmines has been reduced in

many cases the remaining ones provide worse rather than better working conditions. The stability of the industry and the profit margins of the unionized forms have been jeopardized, and in Perry County at least, the union has been destroyed.

The system has operated in a spiral. Workers laid off from the mechanized firms are forced to take jobs at reduced pay with the unautomated mines which in turn under-sell and therefore force the closing the big mines. It is not necessary for the true mines to take the major portion of a large mine's market to force the closing of a mechanized mine. All that is needed is that the highly capitalized mines be prevented from operating constantly enough to make the capital equipment pay for itself. Faced with this prospect, many of the operators closed down their large mining operations. Greater profits were to be made by leasing mining machinery and operating tipples as a processing service for truck mines. The workers thus released into the labor market further reduce wages in the non-union mines and by this process the truck miner's spiral has even affected the production of the most efficient mines.

The union has been unable to halt this process for several reasons, the most important being the inability of the workers to get jobs outside of the coal industry. As a result the workers who remain in the area all too quickly exhaust their unemployment benefits and must look for alternative sources of support for their large families. Traditionally such support would come from the more fortunate members of the family, e.g. employed uncles, brother, cousins, etc.; but given a situation as inclusive as the present, few families are fortunate enough to be self-sustaining. The result has been strong pressure to return to mining non-union operations. In a sense, the struggle has been between two conflicting loyalties: loyalty to family and loyalty to union. Casual observation indicates that family loyalty wins out in most cases, even though Perry County has in past years been a strong United Mine Workers area. A certain part of the mining population, however, has decided in favor of the United Mine Workers. In many cases these are the people who have alternate incomes or are able to maintain themselves above the starvation level either through family, farm, pension, or welfare. By and large these are the people who have supported the unauthorized strike through the Fall and Winter of 1962-63.

There are three basic choices left to people who have found themselves unemployed in Perry County: migration, stagnation, or re-employment in non-union mines. The fact that none of the three choices offers a clear advantage to the people involved has resulted in examples of all three decisions appearing in the area. A fourth choice, re-employment in alternative native local industry, is quite simply not open to the former miners.

The chances of bringing in industry are remote for many reasons, the most important having to do with the remoteness of Hazard itself. As it stands now, Hazard has little if anything to offer to a prospective company—it is distant from national markets, and it obviously does not have the technical resources to attract any of the electronics or technical equipment manufacturers. The town has few plant sites since much of the flat land in the area is subject to seasonal flooding. Even after a new highway is completed, Hazard will be many hours away from any large metropolitan district. The long-term prospects for re-employment in the Hazard area are therefore almost as dim as the short-run.

Most of the families which move out of the hazard area migrate to one of the industrial areas of Michigan, Indiana, or Ohio. In many cases the families move to an area in which former neighbors or relatives have already settled. The migration solution to the problems of unemployment in Hazard is in some respects the only hope of the area and in others the source of

its greatest problems. It is obvious that if industry will not move to the workers, the workers will have to move to the industry. But most of the industrial areas which the Perry County migrants have chosen have unemployment problems of their own. The result is that the migrants find themselves in a strange environment, without jobs, without the job skills and education of the northern worker with whom they must compete in the job market, and most importantly without settled and friendly neighbors and relatives to whom they may turn in a moment of desperation. The migrants therefore take their problems with them when they leave the Hazard area.

For Hazard the migration of workers makes the community even less desirable to private industry. One of the few resources Hazard has to offer private industry is a willing and able work force. Migration tends to select the best-trained and most ambitious workers and as can be seen from the above discussion, the younger workers as well. The problem is not limited to workers. Students who go on to college do not return to Hazard after graduation, and professionals of the area show dissatisfaction with its limited recreational and cultural facilities. The result is a general exodus of those people who might have created the pool of trained workers in which the government has placed its hopes for the industrial development of the area.

It is widely recognized that the character of the American job market is changing. The great preponderance of the unemployed in the Hazard area fall into the three low-skilled classifications: no work experience, unskilled, and semi-skilled. These three categories accounted for 1530 of the 1940 people applying for unemployment insurance or jobs through the Hazard employment office in the month of June, 1963. These people represent the jobs which machinery has eliminated.

The tragedy has been the fact that while the industry was at its peak it drew men out of the high schools by presenting an opportunity for quick employment and providing few rewards for the well educated. Now the industry has cast the uneducated aside and as a result the Hazard area has a large number of unemployed who are incapable of competing in the national job market against workers educated through high school and beyond. It has been estimated that in Eastern Kentucky there are over 61,000 functional illiterates, i.e. people unable to write telephone numbers or add up restaurant bills. The median number of grades completed in Perry County is 8.0, in comparison with the national median of 10.6 and the state median of 8.7. Most of the surrounding counties have even lower medians.

The higher drop-out rates among the farm and mine Perry County residents gives some idea of the concentration of the poorly educated among the unemployed and low income members of the community. This condition is further verified by the fact that the median education level in rural Perry County is 7.5 while the town of Hazard is 9.9 years.

The Federal government has recognized the importance of education and retraining in the solution of Eastern Kentucky's unemployment problems, and provides two programs for retraining. One is financed through the Man Power Development and Training Act and the other through the Area Redevelopment Act. The training for these programs in the Hazard area is done through the Hazard Vocational School, a public institution financed jointly by the state, federal, and local governments. The school offers ten different programs of vocational study to a student body of about 300. Most of the students are still in high school and attend the vocational school on a half-day basis. The remaining students are out-of-school youth and adults either unemployed or seeking advancement in their current job. Adult tuition is \$15 a month while out-of-school youth (age 16-20) pay a \$10 enrollment fee and a \$3 a month tuition. Tuition for the high school students is paid by the Hazard Board of Education. The ARA students receive a weekly

allowance while MDTA provides an allowance and tuition. Table II summarizes current projects under the MDTA and ARA in the Hazard Area.

The present Federal retraining program is inadequate in several respects. In the first place, the present program is training too few, only 103. In an area where thousand are currently unemployed, 103 people barely begins to scratch the surface of the problem. Secondly, the present program accepts only those people who are easily trained; the typing and stenographic courses accept only people with previous training. Neither of the federal programs accepts students without a high school education and all students must pass an aptitude test. Such requirements clearly exclude a large if not a major portion of the area's unemployed. The Johnson administration is now supporting a bill introduced by Representative Perkins which would liberalize these requirements and provide training in the basic learning skills as well as training in the trades. In a speech outlining the government's policies toward the Eastern Kentucky unemployment problems, Wilbur Cohen, assistant U. S. Secretary of Health Education and Welfare, said that current administration plans for retraining would triple funds and expand the range of classes receiving funds. Mr. Cohen outlined a program in which the trained workers would create their own employment, based on the hope that a pool of skilled workers would be an attraction to industry.

TABLE II

ARA and MDTA Projects for the Hazard Area Vocational School

	No. of Trainees	Training Cost	Average Cost for Trainee
MDTA Projects			
Auto Mechanics	30	\$26,312	
Draftsmen	18	16,383	
Total MDTA	48	42,695	\$899
ARA Projects			
Clerk-Stenographer	15	2,807	
Automatic Transmission	20	3,785	
Atenographer	20	3,417	
Total ARA	55	10,009	181
Total ARA and MDTA	103	52,704	511

Source: Kentucky Office ARA and MDTA, "ARA and MDTA Projects by Schools as of July 1963", Frankfort.

In the case of the younger workers there can be no doubt as to the usefulness of such aid. Even if they are not immediately employed, the productivity that the society can expect from such workers would pay for the programs many times over. For the older workers the answer is not as easy. Not only is there a question of the ability and desire of such people to take training courses; there is a question as to employability of such workers.

Graduates of the present program have by and large been more able to find jobs than their untrained peers. Over 90% of Hazard Vocational School graduates have found employment in their field of training or a related field. There is a question as to whether the present program could be expanded and still equal the success of the present arrangements. The question is whether the government is justified in its hope for auto-creation of jobs for skilled workers. Two factors, the lack of new job opportunities and the existence of large numbers of untrainable or difficult-to-train workers, provide the most difficult employment challenge the region has to face.

In addition to the present numbers of unskilled workers, the region faces the problem of additional students leaving the schools and aggravating the situation. The Perry County school system suffers from two problems: 1) the poor quality of the physical plant, and 2) the lack of funds for either improvements or for teacher's salaries.

The poor quality of the physical plant in the Perry County school system can be inferred from the large numbers of small schools on which the county relies for its elementary teaching.

- 37 one room schools
- 21 two room schools
- 7 three room schools
- 1 four room school
- 12 consolidated schools
- 1 consolidated high school

Source: Perry County School System information, supplied by Dennis Wooton, Superintendent.

For the most part, these schools represent old ramshackle buildings with poor heating and no plumbing. The Hazard School System fares better, having four large elementary schools and one large high school. The small Perry County schools suffer from not only the poor physical plant, but also the difficulty of attracting good teachers into the small isolated communities in which the schools are located. The teacher shortage was so acute in 1963 that the Perry County School system was forced to hire 73 "emergency," i.e., unqualified, teachers to teach 3,504 students. Solutions for the problem through consolidation are difficult because of the impossibility of providing transportation for the pupils in communities lacking roads.

The financing of Perry County Schools is through 90% state funds and 10% local taxes. Reductions in the local property assessments have caused revenues from local taxes to fall even further. Raising low teacher's salaries is therefore difficult. The present salary maximum in the Perry County School System is \$4,690 for a teacher with ten years of experience, an M.A., and 36 hours of credits. Starting salary for a B.A. is \$3,600.

The Perry County School System suffers from much the same personal problems as the rest of the community. All of the best people can command much higher salaries and working conditions in other areas. Teachers in the Perry system find that Ohio is willing to hire them for better positions at better salaries under better working conditions and as a result Perry suffers from a high teacher turnover. Improvements in salaries have taken place as well as other improvements in order to remedy the situation. Bringing Perry County schools up to the national standard, however, will be a much more difficult task.

Inadequate education in the early grades and high school contributes to the problems of unemployment both by failing to provide the motivation for further training and by failing to provide the foundations on which further education and training must be based.



A small plot of land, friends, federal food stamps and possibly a disability benefit are sufficient to sustain a family in Hazard, if not provide it with the fruit of American free enterprise. There were 2723 households in Perry County or 13,289 people receiving free food in the last month of the Commodity Distribution Program (February 1963). This amounts to better than a third of the total population. With the new Food Stamp Program which includes an examination of financial status to determine eligibility, there are 1414 households or approximately 7000 people receiving aid, still approximately one-sixth of the population. In addition to the food programs there are 5,829 persons in Perry County receiving some sort of benefit from the Social Security Administration. These programs provide about \$330,000 dollars per month in direct assistance to Perry County residents. In comparison, in an average month, coal production in Perry County produces about \$500,000 in wages. This means that the Federal government alone is making welfare payments equal to more than one half of the wage payments of the coal industry. This seriously underestimates the role of government in supporting a large unemployed population. In addition to the Federal government's payments are those of the state unemployment compensation. Welfare programs are supporting a significant part of the area's population in idleness. The effect of such programs is no doubt a stabilizing influence on the retail industry, but it sustains a way of life that is neither productive to the community nor capable of providing a rich environment for the families involved.

In addition to the sociological problems generated by "maintenance" welfare measures, there are economically damaging aspects of an immobile, employed work force. In Hazard, the pool of idle workers created by such programs serves as the basis for a competitive labor market which holds down wages and retards the process of automation in the local industry. By retarding the mobility of the work force, the current welfare programs create problems for the employed workers in the community. Obviously the welfare measures are necessary to the well-being of the people involved and must be continued, but at the same time, cognizance should be taken of the responsibility of the community to provide more jobs either within or outside the area in order to relieve the pressure on the labor market.

Approximately 1000 workers are currently employed in truck mines, including auger and strip operations. Although it has been claimed that the number of jobs available in the truck mines is almost unlimited, it appears that employment will never be much higher than the current figure. The impossibility of determining either the elasticity of supply or demand precludes determining accurately how many workers could or would be employed at any given wage level. However, since wages in the small mines already are approaching the federal minimum, it is unlikely that many more jobs will be created by falling wages, even if the workers have not reached the point of withdrawing their services from the market. Many workers have already reached the point and refuse to work in the truck mines. Among the reasons cited for refusal to accept such jobs are union loyalty, fear of poor working conditions and violations of safety regulations as well as poor wages.

Many workers, however, have found the acceptance of such jobs a moral imperative when the health and welfare of their families are involved. In some cases incomes from the truck mines were supplemented by food from the Federal welfare measures. The leaders of the striking miners have accused the Federal government of subsidizing low wages through the distribution of free food but the government officials administering the program maintain that the new investigations make such violations unlikely. Over 1,000 families were dropped from the food distribution program lists with the institution of eligibility investigations in March of 1963.

The fact that the number of union mines in Perry County and throughout Eastern Kentucky was rapidly falling had several serious effects on the United Mine Workers. Revenues for the Mine Workers Welfare fund began to decline along with dues and membership. Alarmed by the decline, the union moved to cut off the small truck mines from their markets and source of coal and labor. In their attempts to end the production of coal under non-union conditions the UMWA acted on two levels, through governmental and private contract with the employers.

On the governmental level the United Mine Workers joined with the largest of the northern producers to cut off the truck mines from governmental markets. In 1954 the union and the Pittsburgh-Consolidation Coal Company filed a petition under the provisions of the Walsch-Healy Act, asking that the government establish a minimum wage for the companies from which it purchases coal. The government accepted the petition and, as traditional with Walsch-Healey determinations, the government established the then union scale wage as the prevailing minimum.

Several factors, however, made this an ineffective approach to the problem: 1) the union negotiated a new contract with substantial wage increases less than a month after the government had established the 1952 contract wage as the prevailing rate; 2) the Walsch-Healey determination did not include the then 30 cent and now 40 cent a ton Welfare Fund royalty payment; and 3) the Federal purchases of coal were not sufficient to narrow the market for non-union coal to the point of forcing the operators to raise their wage scales. Even though the government is investigating possible violations of the Walsch-Healey Act in the Hazard area it is doubtful that their effort will substantially change the production pattern of the county. There are too many other markets for the coal produced from non-union mines for this type of action to have substantial effect.

The United Mine Workers' second attempt to regain control over the labor market in the region was more direct. During the 1958 wage negotiations the union demanded the insertion of a "protective wage clause" which would have prevented union operations from handling non-union coal or from leasing coal lands to non-union operations. If the measure had been contracted, it would have smothered the truck mines at their base by preventing the small companies from obtaining mineral rights for the coal they mined and preventing the non-union coal from reaching the national market. The action was clearly aimed at the essential feature of the truck mines: their low capitalization. Since most of the small operators could not have afforded the capital expenditure to either buy coal rights or to sink capital funds into a tippie with its washing, sorting and other processing equipment, the "protective wage clause" would have, in all likelihood, effectively ended the threat to the automated high wage mines.

The northern companies agreed to the clause without much objection. In the first place, they were not involved in the practice, and in the second, coal from the non-union operations threatened their markets. The southern companies, on the other hand, refused to sign the agreement and broke quite openly with the northern operators over the clause. The Southern Coal Producers' Association contended that the agreement was in violation of the anti-trust laws and refused to grant their negotiators authority to sign the contract except at the discretion of individual companies. As the center of the truck mining industry, the Eastern Kentucky operators were particularly opposed to signing the agreement. When the contract expired on March 7, 1959, the union struck the mines in southeastern Kentucky, both to gain compliance with the provisions of the contract and to reorganize the area. The strike was marked by violence and high emotions. After 12 months of strike, the UMWA agreed to a National Labor Relations Board decision forbidding the union to attempt enforcement of the "protective wage clause." During the course of the strike the union became the subject of approximately \$12,000,000 in damage suits. In the

North the clause was abandoned when challenged as a violation of the newly enacted Landrum-Griffin Act.

Between the 1959 strike and the Fall of 1963, the United Mine Workers adopted a wait-and-see attitude toward the area. As payments to the Welfare Fund continued to dwindle the Fund was forced to cut back on the benefits, reducing pensions from \$100 per month to \$75 per month in February of 1961, and revoking Hospital Cards in September of 1962 of miners who had been unemployed for more than a year or who had become re-employed in a non-union mine.

The revocation of the Hospital Cards was the signal for a relatively popular unauthorized strike in the area of Southeastern Kentucky in late 1962. The UMWA refused to support the strike on the grounds that the union stood to lose more funds if the violence which marked the unsuccessful 1959 strike were to recur. The strikers were left to their own devices with regard to leadership and funds. The strike received momentary and moral support from radical groups who perhaps mistook the traditional violence of the people involved as an indication of especially severe conditions. In fact, the violence represents the product of a smoldering resentment dating back to the original organization drives of the 1930's and is not directly related to the severity of the operators' resistance. Much of the violence took place between pickets and non-pickets, rather than between the workers and the companies. For many reasons, including a lack of clear objectives among the strike leaders and a fear of the "red menace" among the traditionally chauvinistic and politically unsophisticated people of the area, the strike petered out as the Winter wore on. Even though the more visible signs of the strike disappeared, violence in the form of dynamiting of homes and railroads continued on through the Spring and into the Summer of 1963. In June, the leaders of the strike were arrested under a charge of conspiracy to destroy the railroads. Despite the arrests, violence continued and the protest of the unemployed was revived under much the same leadership as the earlier strike. During the Summer, however, the approach of the group turned away from the traditional union tactics of strike and organization toward more political forms of dissent. The organization demanded representation of the newly formed Hospital Board for administration of the UMWA Welfare Fund Hospitals under the Presbyterian non-profit corporation and proposed a march on Washington to demand "jobs and trade union conditions."

In the wake of these proposals, the United Mine Workers renewed their efforts officially to reorganize the area. It remains to be seen whether these actions will have any effect on either working conditions and wages or unemployment. For the present, however, non-union coal production continues to expand in the Hazard field.

The relation of the United Mine Workers to unemployment is both casual and problematical. The United Mine Workers first organized Perry County in 1933. The social and economic conditions in the area were such at the time that unlike neighboring Bell and Harlan Counties the UMWA was able to sign up 30,000 people in two months with relatively little violence. The early contracts which the United Mine Workers signed in Perry County were of the "Southern pattern," i.e., they included the southern differential, a 40 cent per day lower wage scale than was negotiated in the northern field. The justification of this differential was partly traditional and partly to offset the fact that coal mining in the southern field was less efficient than in the north due to the physical structure of the coal veins. Since the northern veins are thicker, production per man hour tends to be higher and mining machinery can be used more efficiently. The UMWA never accepted the differential as a theoretically sound clause, and as soon as they had the strength, eliminated it from the contracts.

In combination with the lower freight rates, the differential gave the southern field a competitive advantage over the northern mines which allowed them to gain increasingly a larger part of the national market.

Because of its peculiar railroad situation, the Hazard field was only able to exploit a part of the southern competitive advantage. Even though it is a part of the southern field, the only railroad in Perry County runs northward. It has thus been barred from sharing in the export and southern freight rate reductions. It is difficult to understand why this situation has been allowed to exist, since only a short distance separates the Lexington-Fleming Division of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad serving Perry County from the C and O Railroad serving the South. The fact that the connection has never been made has severely limited the market area for the Hazard field and is in some part a cause of the present difficulties.

In 1941 the United Mine Workers were able to eliminate the southern differential and thus complete their drive to remove wages from the competitive forces at work in the coal industry. The operators had considered the differential as economic adjustment which had enabled firms in less favored areas to mine coal and therefore maintain employment. The union, however, contended that such coal was only mined at the expense of high wage mines in the ore efficient areas and therefore represented a penalty to the higher wage paying operators. For this reason, the elimination of the southern operators, despite their misgivings, were not left without some advantages over the northern compatriots, mainly in the form of lower freight rates, and continued to expand their share of the market, if more slowly than before. As noted earlier, the mines of Perry County have not been able to take advantage of the more favorable rates enjoyed by the nearby competitive fields. As a result, when the southern differential was struck from the contracts, the mines of Perry County were severely limited in their area of equal competitive advantage. Because of the war-time boom in coal production, the result of the wage equalization agreement were not immediately felt in the Hazard field. As the competition tightened into the early 1950's, however, the price of coal began to fall and the Hazard area operations found themselves unable to compete with those operations having either more favorable freight rates or more favorable seam conditions. The results of this squeeze can be observed in the rapid demise of the union rail operations in Perry County.

The delay factor in the effect of the equalization of wage rates has largely obscured its importance in the minds of the local operators who prefer to consider the United Mine Workers Welfare and Retirement Fund as the major cause of the ills. As an area of high production costs and low margin, the Hazard coal operators have felt the burden of the royalty more keenly than their more fortunate competitors. On the other hand, since the royalty was applied equally to every ton of coal produced in a relatively competitive industry, its effect has probably been more dissipated than the operators are willing to concede. The prominence of this attribution of financial difficulties to the Welfare Fund royalty payment is probably more due to the chronological proximity of Welfare Fund publicity and the financial difficulties of the operators than to a causal outlay for the operators which is easily grasped as a source of "unnecessary" expenditure and is, therefore, a convenient scapegoat.

The results of the 1941 contract are now coming back to haunt the UMWA. Although the UMWA has always realized that the encouragement of high-wage, high efficiency mining would mean unemployment for many of its members, the UMWA has felt that the transition would take place slowly enough to allow for the relocation of the miners in other industries. What the UMWA failed to conculate was the low skill level of their membership and the general decline in the ratio of employment opportunities to job seekers. The result has been large-scale, long-term

unemployment in coal mining communities throughout the United States. This unemployment represents frictional, cyclical, and technological factors at work on the labor force, but in the sense that the United Mine Workers have seen fit to maintain a wage rate well above the market equilibrium, they are responsible for much of the unemployment in the coal mining areas.

Coal production in the Hazard area has grown in two great bursts during and following the two World Wars. During each of these periods the productive capacity grew to levels far in excess of the demand for the year following the boom periods. This capacity in part represented an influx of workers into the coals fields during these same periods. In the post-war periods, the excess capacity also represented excess workers.

Other structural causes of unemployment can be traced to various changes in the resource-use pattern within the national economy. One of the prime factors affecting the demand for coal has been the change from steam to diesel engines on the railroads. The other has been the decline in the use of coal for home heating, although the extent of this loss is perhaps exaggerated by a failure to attribute at least part of the growth in coal consumption by electric utilities providing alternate heating arrangements. Nevertheless, the tendency within the economy to substitute alternative fuels for coal is clear.

By far the most important factor in the increased operating efficiency of the coal mining industry has been mechanization. As an example, Blue Diamond's Leatherwood I mine, producing an almost identical amount of coal today as in 1948, uses approximately one third the staff. If anything this understates the technological progress that has taken place, for it fails to take into account the tendencies toward reduced efficiency of this mine caused by increased age. The first coal, taken from a mine within feet of the mine portal, is cheaper to produce than that coal taken out fifteen years later literally miles from the tippie. The two-thirds of the work force displaced in this mine by machinery falls quite obviously in the category of technological unemployment.

The present unemployed worker in Perry County, must also be viewed in the light of the fact that he has failed to take the course that over 20,000 of his compatriots have taken, i.e. to move. The importance of friction in the unemployment problems of the Hazard area and vicinity can be easily overstated. While it is quite true that strong family ties and a traditional attachment to the land have been factors in many workers' decisions to stay in the area, it is also true that pride in family and indeed a sense of responsibility toward providing family sustenance have equally motivated some of the unemployed to seek employment in far corners of the nation. There are very real barriers to employment and mobility for the unemployed Hazard miner. Handicapped, with his low skill level and cultural "backwardness," the unemployed miner faces real difficulties even in a favorable labor situation. When he seeks to compete with other workers in the northern industrial centers, the problems are insurmountable. In addition to the general problems of education and culture among the work force, there are the special problems faced by the older miners who find themselves discriminated against because of age, and the poverty-stricken who cannot afford the gasoline to look for work, much less bear the expense of moving and resettling their families.

The problem of unemployment in Hazard cannot be viewed in isolation from the problems of the general economy. There are two important links between Hazard and the outside world which contribute to the unemployment problems of the vicinity of Hazard. The first is the general level of unemployment throughout the country. The Department of Economic Security for June of

1963 lists no areas of labor shortage and only 16 of the 150 “major production and employment centers” have job opportunities sufficient to provide employment in balance with the local work force. All of the remaining 134 areas have unemployment problems ranging from moderate to substantial.

Two of the sixteen areas of “balance labor markets,” Dayton and Columbus, Ohio, are located within the migration area of the Perry County unemployed, and it is to these areas that those workers well informed enough about job opportunities flock. Here, however, they must compete for the available jobs with workers from not only other Appalachian regions, but also from urban areas such as Pittsburgh and Buffalo. The result is as stated by the employment bureau:

Those who were capable of doing other types of work went to the industrial cities of the north and many have come back after being laid-off their jobs there. Therefore, the unemployed are made up of persons who have lost their jobs and remained in the Hazard Area and of persons who have returned after being laid-off jobs in other states.

Nevertheless these areas have helped to reduce unemployment and they along with some not so favorable areas have accommodated over 20,000 displaced workers and their dependents from Perry County. It must be remembered, however, that the situation is basically as outlined by John L. Lewis, “No longer can the young men of the mining industry go to the steel industry to get a job, or the ship building industry, or any other industry and hope to get a job. Now there is a waiting line of displaced men in these industries.” In this sense the problem of Hazard is basically a national one and the unemployment classified as cyclical. As long as there is little opportunity for employment in the outside there will be little or no reason for an unemployed worker from Hazard to move out of the area and away from the security of his family.

The second link between the national economy and the problems of Hazard is the failure of the national economy to provide an active industrial complex capable of supplying a stable high priced market for coal. Between the high-wage policy of the United Mine Workers and a tight coal market, operators have found themselves forced to mechanize in order to remain efficient enough to compete successfully in the market place. It is, however, now doubtful that an increased market for coal could any longer be of help to the unemployed miners. Current estimates indicate that a million tons of coal require approximately 350 men to produce. Figuring on this basis, Perry County would have to double production in order to absorb its current unemployment. This is assuming that present mines in the county are not capable of increasing production with present crews. As this assumption is clearly unjustified considering the number of miner working short weeks in the area, it is improbable that unemployment relief will come from this quarter.

The population of Perry County is divided into three distinct social categories: the miners, the retail merchants, and the operators. For the most part, the miners live in the areas outside of Hazard proper. The miners are at the bottom of the local social ladder. They lack money, education, and the cultural traditions which would allow them to blend easily with the rest of the community. They have created their own sub-culture in the Kentucky hills. Very family conscious, they almost form clans reminiscent in this respect of the Scots.

Economically this is the worst section of the population. Many of them survive only through the nutritional supplements of food stamps and backyard gardens. The conditions of life of this group are not substantially different whether employed or unemployed. They live in ramshackle

houses in many cases without indoor plumbing and the other amenities which have come to be considered essential to civilized living.

The retail merchants, on the other hand, characteristically live within the city of Hazard itself. They perform the civic as well as the retail business of the area. Thus, the mayor of Hazard is also the owner and operator of the largest department store in Hazard, and similarly the owner of the local Chevrolet dealership is the president of the Chamber of Commerce.

The merchants are better off financially, socially and educationally than the miners and have not suffered the effects of the economic decline as severely as the miners. Part of the protection from the economic decline can be traced to the great quantities of Federal and State transfer payments which have served to sustain the purchasing power of the community even in the face of reduced wage-earner buying power.

The effect of money going through the retail economy from the Federal and state welfare programs should not be underestimated. Federal Food stamps must be spent in their entirety with the retail merchants of the community, so that the retail merchants benefit from aid given directly to the miners. The migrants who send money back into the community help to sustain and protect the retail community since the reduction in the number of workers has not meant a proportionate decline in wage revenues coming into the area. This partly explains the well being of the retail center of Perry County.

The retail community has, however, not been unaffected by the declining economy of the area. Part of the apparent prosperity within the retail district of Hazard itself is merely a reflection of the fact that stores in the outlying area, especially commissaries in the now defunct coal towns, have been closing down, forcing the people who would have normally depended on such stores into the central business district. In this sense the retail economy is not as sound as it would appear at first observation. It must, however, be noted that the external signs of hard times, closed and boarded stores, do not exist in Hazard.

The third division of Perry County society is the upper income "power elite." This group is not concerned with the day to day civic duties as are the retail merchants. They are, however, concerned with state politics. This group represents the financial and mine operating interests of the community. Its relations with the other segments of the community is often heated and hostile reflecting in some cases honest grievances and in other jealousies and petty differences. This the miners claim they are exploited, the mine operators complain that the workers are lazy, the town officials claim that the commercial interests are standing in the way of civil improvements, etc. The upper income group not only takes relatively little interest in the civic affairs of Hazard, it is generally more outwardly oriented. It goes to Lexington and Louisville for its medical services and shopping, and is considerable more mobile than the rest of the community.

These three divisions can also be seen in the general population of the United States, but they tend to be exaggerated in Perry County by the extremes of wealth in such a small isolated area and the existence of the single central business community and governing center which Hazard represents.

The residents of Perry County are united on one issue: they all desire that Hazard return to something like the prosperity that it enjoyed in the post-war period. To the miners this means simple "more jobs and trade union conditions." To the merchants and business interests it means the development of new industry, notably of the tourist variety. In order to accomplish this the community is working with Federal grants to develop the basic facilities needed before industry will consider relocating in the area. The immediate effect of these measures is to create jobs in

construction and associated industries. These are temporary, in nature, however, and in some cases represent outside labor brought in by the contractors.

The chances of bringing in permanent employment are slight. The Federal government has already refused grants to help develop a mountain top tourist complex until the time as highways into the area are completed. The potentialities of the tourist industry are substantially as set down in the Kentucky University Study of the Appalachian region:

There is little reason to doubt that the potential of the tourist industry is much greater than has been realized to date, and that properly developed it will be a tremendous asset to the Appalachian economy. At the same time it should be recognized that tourism is not a panacea for all the economic ills of the region, and that its full possibilities will only be realized after careful planning and hard work...In short, the tourist industry could not absorb the region's labor surplus in the foreseeable future even if all the latter were trained for service occupations, which of course is not the case.

The situation in Hazard would not exist except for the interrelation of innumerable factors, each in its way shaping the course of events within the framework of the whole economic system. It is thus impossible to pick out a single issue like automation and say "there you see before you the mechanism which has created unemployment by enabling the mines to produce the same amount of coal with such and such number of workers fewer than the old methods of mining." Such a statement is totally unjustified if considered in the context of the economy as a whole.

The introduction to "Program 60," a planning report for the Eastern Kentucky region contains the following paragraph:

Private enterprise, as a system, thus bears some responsibility in the creation of the present situation. It is hoped that the leadership of free enterprise will recognize the broad responsibility of the system, and engage in special development efforts and share in a profitable economy later.

Hazard, Kentucky, presents a challenge to the entire structure of the American economy. The allocative mechanism is at work and is causing, and has caused, pain and misery to a part of the population. The problem is to make the mechanism differentiate between means and ends, i.e. to differentiate between men and material. Free enterprise in Hazard has failed to make clear whether the people serve the system or the system serves the people. The problem is not only faced in Hazard, it is faced wherever the economy makes a transition. Hazard poses a challenge to the American economy. That challenge is to accommodate change without wholesale disruption of human life. Hazard is important not because it represent the problem in its most acute form or because it involves large numbers of people, but because it represents the problem in miniature, and because it has dramatized in violence the need for rapid and massive correction of current policy and attitude toward the unemployed.

#### Problems Relating to Unemployment in the Vicinity of Hazard, Kentucky

by Richard Greenberg, September 1963

Substantially revised and edited by ERAP staff for the purposes of the Hazard Conference





*“Beating of Rabbi Lelyveld during Freedom Summer”*

### ***STATEMENTS OF DISCIPLINE OF NONVIOLENT MOVEMENTS***

The purpose of this material is to stimulate discussion of the values and practices of the movement. Is the movement the germ of a new society? Would we want a whole society in which people related to each other as they do in the movement?

#### **I. Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee Statement of Purpose:**

We affirm the philosophical or religious ideal of nonviolence as the foundation of our purpose, the presupposition of our faith and the manner of our action. Nonviolence as it grows from the Judeo-Christian tradition seeks a social order of justice permeated by love. Integration of human endeavor represents the crucial first step toward such a society.

Through nonviolence, courage displaces fear; love transforms hate. Acceptance dissipates prejudice; hope ends despair. Peace dominates war; faith reconciles doubt. Mutual regard cancels enmity. Justice for all overcomes injustice. The redemptive community supersedes systems of gross social immorality.

Love is the central motif of nonviolence. Love is the force by which God binds man to himself and man to man. Such love goes to the extreme; it remains loving and forgiving even in the midst of hostility. It matches the capacity of evil to inflict suffering with even more enduring capacity to absorb evil, all the while persisting in love.

By appealing to conscience and standing on the moral nature of human existence, nonviolence nurtures the atmosphere in which reconciliation and justice become actual possibilities.

II. CORE Rules for Action (excerpts)

1. Investigate the facts carefully before determining whether or not racial injustice exists in a given situation.

2. Seek at all times to understand both the attitude of the person responsible for a policy of racial discrimination, and the social situation which engendered the attitude. Be flexible and creative, showing a willingness to participate in experiments which seem constructive, but being careful not to compromise CORE principles.

3. Make a sincere effort to avoid malice and hatred toward any group or individual.

4. Never use malicious slogans or labels to discredit any opponent.

5. Be willing to admit mistakes.

6. Meet the anger of any individual or group in the spirit of good will and creative reconciliation; submit to assault and do not retaliate in kind either by act or word.

7. Never engage in action in the name of the group except when authorized by the group or one of its action units.

8. When in action obey the orders issued by the authorized leader or spokesman of the project. Criticism (may be referred later) back to the group.

III. Staff decorum suggested for SNCC SW Georgia Project:

(1) There will be no consumption of alcoholic beverages.

(2) Men will not be housed with women.

(3) Romantic attachments on the level of 'girl-boy friend relations' will not be encouraged within the group.

(4) The staff will go to church regularly.

(5) The group shall have the power of censure.

IV. Pledge of Freedom Riders imprisoned in Parchman Penitentiary

(also discussed in Unit VII):

Having, after due consideration, chosen to follow without reservation, the principles of nonviolence, we resolve while in prison:

\* to practice nonviolence of speech and thought as well as action;

\* to treat even those who may be our captors as brothers;

\* to engage in a continual process of cleansing of the mind and body in rededication to our wholesome cause;

\* to intensify our search for orderly living even when in the midst of chaos.

V. From the Discipline of the San Francisco-to-Moscow Walk:

General statement. The purpose of the Walk is to appeal to the mind and conscience of the American people. It is also a part of a nonviolent philosophy to have respect for all human beings and to seek to communicate with them, not to put up barriers between them and ourselves. It is recognized that dress, manners, ways of speaking, etc., of the Team members have a bearing on the impact, emotional, intellectual and spiritual, which they make on those with whom they come into contact on the Walk.

We do not think any committee is in a position to lay down detailed rules on such subjects and in any case sensitivity in our relations to persons and commitment to the project and the way of nonviolence constitute the only true source of right action in these matters.

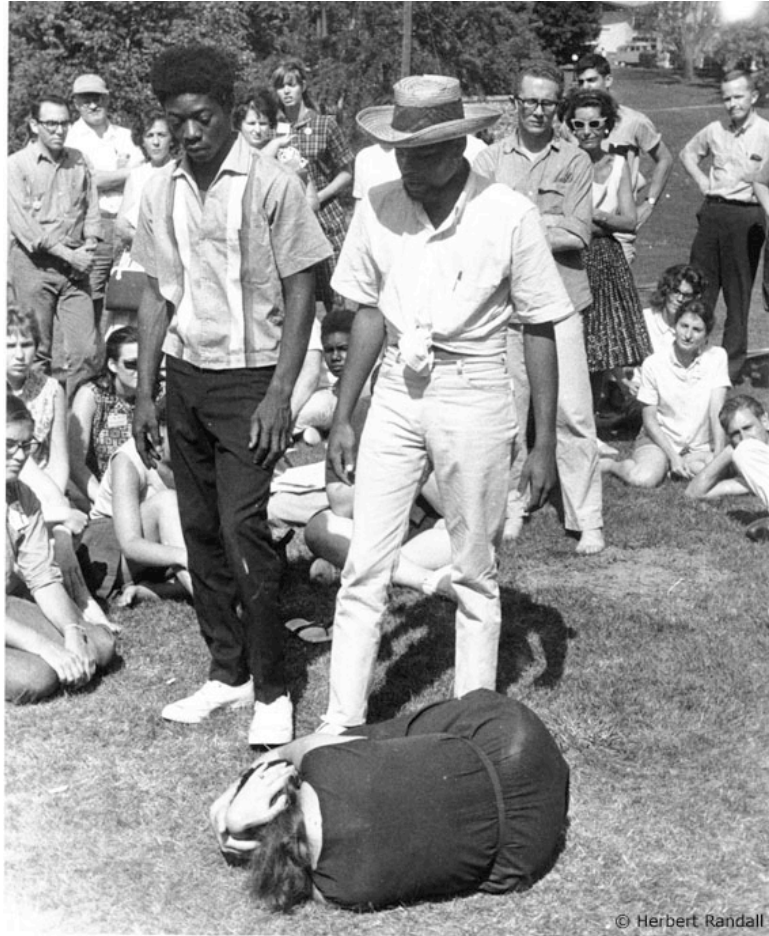
Specifics Our attitude toward officials will be one of sympathetic understanding of the burdens and responsibilities they carry.

No matter what the circumstances or provocation, we will not call names, make hostile remarks, nor respond with physical violence to acts directed against us.

We will adhere as closely as we are able to the letter and spirit of truth in our spoken and written statements.

We will always try to speak to the best in all men, rather than seeking to exploit their weaknesses to what we may believe is our advantage.

Epilogue: (ask students if this sums up the foregoing): “The revolution is a need of being no longer alone, one man against another; it is an attempt to stand together and be afraid no longer . . .” (Ignazio Silone)



*“Demonstration of nonviolent self-defense”*

### ***READINGS IN NONVIOLENCE***

#### **Mahatma Gandhi**

“I have found that life persists in the midst of destruction and, therefore, there must be a higher law than that of destruction. Only under that law would a well-ordered society be intelligible and life worth living. And if that is the law of life, we have to work it out in daily life. Whenever there are jars, wherever you are confronted with an opponent, conquer him with love...that does not mean that all my difficulties are solved. I have found, however, that his law of love has answered as the law of destruction has never done.”

“Nonviolence is a weapon of the strong...”

“Practically speaking there will be probably no greater loss in men than if forcible resistance was offered; there will be no expenditure in armaments and fortifications. The nonviolent training received by the people will add inconceivably to their moral height. Such men and women will have shown personal bravery of a type far superior to that shown in armed warfare. In each case the bravery consists in dying, not in killing. Lastly, there is no such thing as defeat in nonviolent resistance. That such a thing has not happened before is no answer to my speculation. I have drawn no impossible picture. History is replete with instances of individual nonviolence of the type I have mentioned. There is no warrant for saying or thinking that a group of men and women

cannot by sufficient training act nonviolently as a group or nation. Indeed the sum total of the experience of mankind is that men somehow or other live on. From which fact I infer that it is the law of love that rules mankind. Had violence, hate, ruled us, we should have become extinct long ago. And yet the tragedy of it is that the so called civilized men and nations conduct themselves as if the basis of society was violence. It gives me ineffable joy to make experiments proving that love is the supreme and only law of life. Much evidence to the contrary cannot shake my faith. Even the mixed nonviolence of India has supported it. But if it is not enough to convince an unbeliever, it is enough to incline a friendly critic to view it with favor.”

From “My Faith in Nonviolence”, 1930, and “The Future”, 1940

### Martin Luther King

518 words, excerpted from different writings. 1960

Unfortunately, the King Estate would not grant us permission to reprint this short excerpt of Dr. King’s writing—although Septima Clark of the SFLC Citizenship Schools was involved in the Curriculum planning; and although Dr Martin Luther King Jr. visited Mississippi during Freedom Summer to lend his support.

Part of the excerpt is from “My Pilgrimage to Nonviolence,” which can be found at <http://www.forusa.org/nonviolence/30king.html>

### James Farmer

“On May 4 of this year I left Washington, D.C., with twelve other persons on a risky journey into the South. Seven of us were Negro and six were white. Riding in two regularly scheduled buses, one Greyhound and the other Trailways, traveling beneath overcast skies, our little band—the original Freedom Riders—was filled with expectations of storms almost certain to come before the journey was ended.

“Now, six months later, as all the world knows, the fire gutted shell of one bus lies in an Alabama junk yard, and some of the people who almost died with it are still suffering prolonged illnesses.

“A dozen Freedom Riders nearly gave up their lives under the fierce hammering of fists, clubs and iron pipes in the hands of hysterical mobs. Many of the victims will carry permanent scars. . . . More than 350 men and women have been jailed in half a dozen states for doing what the Supreme Court of the United States had already said they had a right to do. The ICC has now issued an historic ruling in behalf of interstate bus integration which may indeed mean that the suffering of the past six months has not been in vain.

“Jail at best is neither a romantic nor a pleasant place, and Mississippi jails are no exception. The first twenty-seven Freedom Riders to arrive in Jackson saw the inside of two different jails and two different prisons—Jackson City Jail, Hinds County Jail, Hinds County Prison Farm, State Pen at Parchman. . . .

“Mississippians, born into segregation, are human too. The Freedom Riders’ aim is not only to stop the practice of segregation, but somehow to reach the common humanity of our fellow men and bring it to the surface where they can act on it themselves. This is a basic motive behind the Freedom Rides, and nonviolence is the key to its realization.

“There is a new spirit among Negroes in Jackson. People are learning that in a nonviolence war like ours, as in any other war, there must be suffering. Jobs will be lost, mortgages will be foreclosed, loans will be denied, persons will be hurt, and some may die. This new spirit was expressed well by one Freedom Rider in the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman. The guards threatened repeatedly, as a reprisal for our insistence upon dignity, to take away our mattresses. ‘Come and get my mattress,’ he shouted. ‘I will keep my soul.’”

### Henry David Thoreau

“Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also in prison. The proper place today, the only place which Massachusetts has provided for her freer and less desponding spirits, is in her prisons, to be put out and locked out of the state by her own act, as they have already put themselves out by their principles. It is there that the fugitive slave, and the Mexican prisoner on parole, and the Indian come to plead the wrongs of his race, should find them; on that separate but more free and honorable ground, where the state places those who are not with her but against her—the only house in a slave state which a free man can abide with honor.

“If any think that their influence would be lost there, and their voices no longer afflict the ear of the state, that they would not be as an enemy within its walls, they do not know by how much truth is stronger than error, nor how much more eloquently and effectively he can combat injustice who has experienced a little in his own person.

“Cast your whole vote, not a strip of paper merely, but your whole influence. A minority is powerless while it conforms to the majority; it is not even a minority then; but it is irresistible when it clogs by its whole weight.

“If the alternative is to keep all just men in prison, or give up war and slavery, the state will not hesitate which to choose. If a thousand men were not to pay their tax bills this year, that would not be a violent and bloody measure, as it would be to pay them, and enable the state to commit violence and shed innocent blood.

“This is, in fact, the definition of a peaceful revolution, if any such is possible. If the tax gatherer or any other public officer asks me, as one has done, ‘But what shall I do?’ my answer is, ‘If you really wish to do anything, resign your office.’ When the subject has refused allegiance and the officer has resigned his office, then the revolution is accomplished.

“But even suppose blood should flow. Is there not a sort of blood shed when the conscience is wounded? Through this wound a man’s real manhood and immortality flow out, and he bleeds to an everlasting death. I see this blood flowing now...

“Must the citizen ever for a moment, or in the least degree, resign his conscience to the legislator? Why has every man a conscience, then? I think that we should be men first, and subjects afterwards. It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law so much as for the right. The only obligation which I have a right to assume is to do at any time what I think right. It is truly enough said, that a corporation has no conscience; but a corporation of conscientious men is a corporation with a conscience.

“Law never made men a whit more just; and, by means of their respect for it, even the well-disposed are daily made the agents of injustice. A common and natural result of an undue respect for law is that you may see a file of soldiers, colonel, captain, corporal, privates, powder-monkeys, and all, marching in admirable order over hill and dale to the wars, against their wills,

aye, against their common sense and consciences, which make it very steep marching indeed, and produces a palpitation of the heart. They have no doubt that it is a damnable business in which they are concerned; they are all peaceably inclined. Now, what are they? Men at all? or small movable forts and magazines, at the service of some unscrupulous men in power. . . .

“The mass of men serve the state thus, not as men mainly, but as machines, with their bodies. They are the standing army, the militia, jailers, constables, posse comitatus, etc. In most cases there is no free exercise whatever of the judgment or of the moral sense; but they put themselves on a level with wood and earth and stones; and wooden men can perhaps be manufactured that will serve the purpose as well. Such command no more respect than men of straw or a lump of dirt. They have the same sort of worth only as horses and dogs. Yet such as these even are commonly esteemed good citizens.

“Others -- as most legislators, politicians, lawyers, ministers, and office holders -- serve the state chiefly with their heads; and, as they rarely make any moral distinctions, they are as likely to serve the devil, without intending it, as God.

“A very few, as heroes, patriots, martyrs, reformers in the great sense, and men, serve the state with their consciences also, and so necessarily resist it for the most part; and they are commonly treated as enemies by it.

“A wise man will only be useful as a man, and will not submit to be ‘clay’ and ‘stop a hole to keep the wind away’ but leave that office to his dust at least:

“I am too high-born to be propertied,  
To be secondary at control,  
Or useful serving man and instrument  
To any sovereign state throughout the world.”

From “Essay On the Duty of Civil Disobedience”

### Howard Zinn

“There is a strong probability that this July and August will constitute another ‘summer of discontent.’ The expectations among Negroes in the Black Belt have risen to the point where they cannot be quieted. CORE (Congress of Racial Equality), SCLC (Southern Christian Leadership Conference), and the intrepid youngsters of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, are determined to move forward.

“With the high probability of intensified activity in the Black Belt this summer, the President will have to decide what to do. He can stand by and watch Negro protests smashed by the local police, with mass jailings, beatings, and cruelties of various kinds. Or he can take the kind of firm action suggested above (enforce the law), which would simply establish clearly what the Civil War was fought for a hundred years ago, the supremacy of the U.S. Constitution over the entire nation. If he does not act, the Negro community may be pressed by desperation to move beyond the nonviolence which it has maintained so far with amazing self-discipline.

“Thus, in a crucial sense, the future of non-violence as a means for social change rests in the hands of the President of the United States. And the civil rights movement faces the problem of how to convince him of this, both by words and by action. For, if non-violent direct action seems to batter itself to death against the police power of the Deep South, perhaps its most effective use is against the national government. The idea is to persuade the executive branch to use its far

greater resources of nonviolent pressure to break down the walls of totalitarian rule in the Black Belt.

“The latest victim\* of this terrible age of violence—which crushed the life from four Negro girls in a church basement in Birmingham, and in this century has taken the lives of over fifty million persons in war—is President John F. Kennedy, killed by an assassin’s bullet. To President Johnson will fall the unfinished job of ending the violence and fear of violence which has been part of the everyday life of the Negro interest he Deep South.”

\*The latest victim now is Mr. Lewis Allen, Negro freedom fighter, Liberty, Mississippi.

*[Editor’s Note:*

*Gandhi: complete text is at [www.mkgandhi.org/nonviolence/faith%20in%20nonviolence.htm](http://www.mkgandhi.org/nonviolence/faith%20in%20nonviolence.htm)*

*Thoreau: Complete text is at <http://eserver.org/thoreau/civil.html>*

*Zinn: from “Limits of Nonviolence”, FREEDOMWAYS, Winter 1964.*

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## ***RIFLE SQUADS OR THE BELOVED COMMUNITY***

By A. J. Muste

Everyone who is at all informed about the civil-rights struggle seems agreed that the summer of 1964 will be critical and quite possibly tragic. The present situation is a product of forces which have been piling up for years and even centuries. The changes that will come about if integration is achieved will be profound in all spheres of American life—the political patterns, the economy, the culture, the ethos. The issues which are faced by individuals and organizations are highly complicated and emotion-laden. Yet all sorts of individuals and groups (including advocates and practitioners of “nonviolence”) have to act—do act and make decisions these days—without adequate information to guide them and for the most part able to calculate the consequences only tentatively and partially. It is clearly important that we try to discern such guidelines to action as may be available.

The Georgia Council on Human Relations, with headquarters in Atlanta, has just issued a pamphlet entitled “Albany, Georgia—Police State.” Readers of *LIBERATION* will recall that this city was the scene of bitter episodes in the civil-rights struggle in 1961 and 1962 and of an encounter between the Albany authorities and people, on the one hand, and the Quebec-Washington-Guantanamo Peace Walk, on the other, early in 1964. The pamphlet begins as follows:

The white majority in Albany is living in a dream—a one hundred year old, segregated dream. In the dream, everybody dwells contentedly. Negroes are happy in their child-like singing and dancing. Whites are loving, understanding and paternal. Listen to some white people in Albany talk:

“We love our Nigras and they love us.”

“We’re making a lot of progress here. I can’t tell you how much we’ve done for our colored folks.”

“Many’s the Monday morning I’ve gone downtown to get our yardman, Joe, out of jail. I take care of my own.”

“My maid told me herself: ‘Oh, no ma’am, I don’t want to be integrated. I wouldn’t be happy in with all the white folks.’”

I can testify on the basis of my own recent visits to Albany and other Southern cities that attitudes and statements such as those listed here are to be found even among religious and other leaders. Moreover, the parochialism which sees the situation essentially in terms of annoyance with Negroes who suddenly don’t keep their place and become “aggressive” and with liberal dreamers or radical and “Communist” subverters who mislead Negroes, is not confined to the South. Many people have no realization of the fact that we live in a world upheaval which is “happening” to all of us, white and Negro alike, much as a natural phenomenon like a hurricane or tidal wave asks no by-your-leave and makes no distinctions based on character, color or anything else. To change the metaphor, there is no awareness that on one level various people and groups are playing parts which they did not freely choose in a drama which they did not write and are not directing. The one thing we are powerless to do is to wish away the problem. Change and disturbance are as certain as “death and taxes.”

In this context it is pertinent to point out that in so far as one can speak of “responsibility” in such historic developments, the white peoples of West Europe and North America have brought

the present situation upon themselves and the rest of mankind. These people developed the technology which made large-scale industry possible and revolutionized agriculture. For several centuries, they spread their rule over the world by direct or indirect conquest, while preaching doctrines of freedom, equality and even love. They are now developing automation. The white nations are still militarily dominant and the nuclear powers. They made the mistake of engaging, mostly among themselves, in two colossal World Wars during the present century, as a result of which their hold over colonial peoples was broken.

The psychological aspect of white conquest should constantly be kept in mind these days. One of the great chasms in the world is that between the peoples who have known humiliations as peoples and those who have not, but instead have humiliated others. The white peoples are the ones who shoved other peoples, especially the colored, off the sidewalk in Western and in Asian and African countries alike, but no one could push the white master off the sidewalk anywhere.

The tide began to turn some time ago and is now flowing strongly in the other direction. The colored peoples are asserting themselves; the white people are having to make room and to abandon theories and practices of superiority. This is never easy, and seldom if ever has backing down from a position of superiority and domination to one of something near equality been done gracefully. But there come times when it has to be done.

We may here remind ourselves that it is a part of American tradition to hold that freedom cannot be handed to people on a silver platter, that real men and women stand up for their rights. "Don't tread on me" is thought of as a typical American slogan. To be ready to defend your own house and shoot the man who invades it and would perhaps insult or attack your women folk is commonly considered a laudable attitude, especially in the South. Are not Negroes following in the is American tradition when they resent being patronized, when they do not have the "feel" of being free until they have taken hold of freedom? One often hears men of standing say that it would be different if Negroes asked (begged?) for their rights, but that "we're not going to be bullied into granting them—don't push us." In much the same way, many Englishmen, of the time of George III, thought of the colonials as upstarts and insolent boors for "demanding" rights and independence. There are many generations of humiliation and oppression behind the upsurge among Negroes and the belligerence now asserting itself. The results are not invariably pleasant. They are often bizarre and in some cases horrible, as revolutions always are. Perhaps we could at least not be so surprised that the familiar accompaniments of mass change manifest themselves in the United States today. We might even take some satisfaction in the realization that once more people are "demanding" that beautiful thing freedom, and their leaders saying: "Let my people go." Perhaps whites could derive a measure of intellectual objectivity and reduce the intensity of their anger by realizing that these things are "happening" to us (as similar surprises, mysteries and disturbances have happened to others in revolutionary periods) rather than being "inflicted" by some mad or evil persons who live in the Negro section or flood out of New York's Harlem to tie up highways to the New York World's Fair.

### Who Is Obstructing Whom?

There are a couple of other cases that might be mentioned of a tendency on the part of whites to apply a double standard and find reprehensible among Negroes what they condone or even practice themselves. Take the resentment of Southern senators and a good many citizens in all sections of the country against what are stigmatized as illegal, undemocratic and obstructionist tactics on the part of Negroes and their allies in the civil-rights struggle. The senators are

presently engaged in the obstructionist tactic of filibuster. It is usually possible for men in positions of power with the machinery of government in their hands, working to maintain the *status quo*, to obstruct measures they oppose, in a respectable and outwardly legal fashion. Southern senators do not have to display themselves on the street in Washington or in the states where their civil-rights senatorial colleagues live. They do not have to commit “trespass,” or distribute leaflets on the street or “disobey an officer’s command.” But the results in the Senate today and the shocking business of their being elected to Congress by a small minority of voters in direct violation of the Constitution—are not less obstructionist and undemocratic, and all the more effective. People who have not realized this and worked to change it are not in a position to press the issue of obstructionism against the civil-rights movement.

Another case in point is that of ordinances in Southern cities and towns, which limit civil liberties and are patently contrary to decisions laid down by the Supreme Court. The only recourse citizens (of whatever color) who want to exercise their democratic rights are supposed to have is to track each unconstitutional ordinance all the way to the Supreme Court, only—in many cases—to have a slightly altered but not less repressive ordinance adopted. In Mississippi a whole series of measures has been enacted for the avowed purpose of preventing or indefinitely delaying change in the racial pattern. Yet a good many people—and not all by any means poorly educated or simple-minded—have a more negative and intense reaction toward the proposed “stall-in” at the World’s Fair (which I am not endorsing at this point) than to the colossal and enduring “stall-in” which is being staged in Mississippi.

A word needs to be said about the attitudes people take toward violence and nonviolence. Many act as if they thought Negroes have a peculiar obligation to be nonviolent and especially in the civil-rights struggle, the struggle for emancipation, Freedom Now. Yet in the very sections of Georgia and other states where any but the most pacific, not to say submissive, conduct on the part of Negroes seems shocking and one frequently has discourses on how readily Negroes resort to violence in their day-to-day life, one finds little espousal of pacifism or nonviolence. There is less concern than in some other sections of the country about the nuclear arms race and the danger of nuclear war. There is only a most embryonic peace movement. The Peace Churches are almost non-existent. The military virtues are extolled. And, of course, one encounters practically no opposition to the location of missile bases and various other military installations in this region.

Until one has faced these facts, one is in no position, either politically or morally, to speak to the Negro community or the civil-rights movement. This is preeminently true of those of us who advocate nonviolence.

### Self-Defense

Turning now to the relevance of nonviolence in face of an undoubtedly growing tendency among Negroes to be suspicious of it and to feel that the movement has to become more militant and resort to more “realistic” tactics, it seems to me at the outset that there is a confusion around the use of the so-called “right to self-defense” and the call to exercise it, which ought to be cleared up. If one is talking in terms of legality and prevailing mores, then the right of an individual to defend himself, his home, his family, even to shoot a man who threatens to shoot or otherwise injure him and his family, undoubtedly exists in American and Western society. So long as that is the case, the Negro should have the right to self-defense as well as the white man. The pamphlet by the Georgia Council on Human Relations referred to at the beginning of this

article states: "Everywhere in the streets of Albany you see white men carrying fire-arms. 'If you are white and can see to sign your name to the application, you are given a permit, no questions asked,' a white businessman observed. Of course, no Negroes need apply."

But the problem now before American society and in particular before Negroes is not so simply or automatically disposed of. For one thing, it is not generally assumed that a good community or one where people can live peacefully is one where all or even many citizens go about with guns in their belts or in their homes. Quite the contrary. As a matter of fact, Malcolm X and other "leaders" who call on Negroes to exercise the right of "self-defense" are not talking about that "right" as commonly understood. I suspect that some of them at least are aware of this and use the term as a demagogic and manipulative device. If they are not aware that this is the case then they are not qualified to be leaders. People who do not know what an explosive or a poison is should not handle explosives or poisons.

What is meant in the present context is only in a small degree that an individual Negro should have a gun and under circumstances of great danger use it against another individual, white or Negro, who attacks him or his family. What is meant is that Negroes generally around the country should provide themselves with firearms and organize rifle clubs wherever there are conflict situations and the agencies which are supposed to provide safety for citizens and enable them to exercise elementary rights fail to do so for Negroes. This tactic is thought to hold good more particularly where whites are armed and have bullied and very likely actually injured or killed Negroes. It is this reasoning which has to be evaluated, not a simple case of "self-defense" or a spontaneous action of one individual toward another in a tense moment.

I have more than once heard it said by Negroes who are reluctantly turning to the idea that "nonviolence" may not be enough, that if in a couple of a few cases Negroes were to use force, or even threaten it seriously, this would cool down the Citizens Council people and white hoodlums. It would also convince the wielders of power in the South that it was no longer possible to keep Negroes down or to delay integration.

It seems to me conceivable that a shooting in some local situation might have what could be called a questioning or catalytic effect in that isolated local instance. But, putting pacifist considerations aside for a moment, one cannot realistically think of the problem raised by the tendency to become belligerent and violent in these isolated local terms. What is virtually certain to happen (and is indeed expected by people like Malcolm X and those who go along with him in greater or less degree) is a summer series of mass demonstrations and rioting in which Negroes will "fight back." Whitney Young, Jr., executive director of the national Urban League, commented on the restraint exercised up to now by Negroes as follows in recent testimony before a Congressional Committee:

I think Negro citizens in the face of the years of provocation, in the face of the historic abuse, have shown an amazing restraint and an amazing loyalty. This from a people who have so little reason to have this kind of faith, who have all the provocation, the abuse, the murders, the years of want, of poor housing, of rats biting their children.

I trust I have made it abundantly clear that in a sense things "happen" to people, even the things they themselves do in situations of social turmoil and that it is absurd to expect that Negroes will be an exception. But this does not absolve individuals and especially leaders from the necessity of making choices as to tactics and not simply being the pawns of historic forces or social hysteria. On this level and in this context the current trend away from nonviolence is certainly subject to suspicion and criticism.

One basic question that exponents of this trend have not, in my opinion, seriously faced is whether Negroes basically and eventually want to be part of American society. I do not necessarily mean society as it is now constituted and organized, though truth compels us to face the fact that this is probably just what large numbers of Negroes want. However, as I see it, a desegregated American society would be pretty radically different from the one we now have. Now I believe that whether in an America radically transformed or not, Negroes as a people want to live in the United States; they don't want to migrate and they don't seriously want to live in a Negro nation-state in some corner of American soil. Parenthetically, the desire of Negroes to control their own movement and not to have it run by whites is legitimate. In this as in other instances, demagogues use nationalist appeals or proclamations of Negro racial superiority to overcome social inertia and evoke a response from those who rightly want to be free from various forms of white domination or patronizing. At the same time, they run the risk of helping to precipitate tragedy.

If for example, Negroes do want to be eventually a genuine part of the American community, then they will have to live in a community to which whites also belong. To create or think lightly of deepened rifts between the races, of psychological wounds which may take long to heal in numerous cities and towns, of polarized enmities, seems clearly dangerous and may be laying the ground work for eventual elimination of that multi-racial or *truly* integrated society which is the object of the civil-rights movement and the goal of the Negro community. The race problem is psychological and social, not merely one of economic or political structure. It is necessary that the reality and shame, the deep roots, of the present rift be exposed and not slurred over. But this can only be for the purpose of obliterating the rift, not for deepening it or making it permanent and utterly rigid.

### Federal Intervention

Even in a more narrowly political sense there is a problem here which has hitherto received too little attention. Important sections of the Negro movement look to Federal action, and specifically the intervention of Federal troops, to contribute at critical moments to the advance of the integration movement. Many seem to have espoused a strategy which will lead to the intervention of Federal troops on a mass scale in Mississippi this summer. The wisdom of this dependence on Federal agencies and especially Federal armed force can be questioned on various grounds. But in the present context it seems clear that the civil-rights movement cannot expect the support of the very Federal agency that is supposed to hold society together at a critical moment, to keep the situation from getting utterly out of hand and the society from falling apart—and this is precisely what the civil rights movement looks to in a desperate situation like Mississippi—and at the same time itself work for the (temporary?) breakdown of the society, or more accurately, accept it as inevitable.

To put it in another way, it is one thing for the Federal troops to intervene eventually in order to protect Negroes from police brutality and or vigilante violence. A quite different situation will exist if it even appears that whites have to be protected from Negro violence born of frustration and intolerable emotional pressures.

To cite a case which to my mind illustrates the perils of dependence on Federal intervention, whether military or not, the Johnson administration is certainly going to try to have a civil-rights bill adopted and then avoid crating a bad image of the United States in the minds of other nations and colored peoples throughout the world. But I do not see how anyone can for a moment

entertain the thought that the administration will welcome a call to send Federal troops to Mississippi or anywhere else during an election campaign; or that one can assume confidently that it will decide to do so at all.

### What Kind of Revolution?

There is another aspect of strategy to which very little if any serious consideration has as yet been given. There is no doubt that those who have been denied freedom and equality have to desire them, and struggle for them in a way that will “disturb” society, or else things will remain as they are (or get worse). This involves “social dislocation.” But when tactics are devised—and the proposed stall-in in connection with the opening of the World’s Fair seems to me probably to fall in this category—with a view to creating inconvenience and disturbance in general, as an outlet for pent-up emotion, then a vast problem is opened up. The same problem is raised when people like Malcolm X ridicule “nonviolent revolution” as spurious and contend that in a real revolution blood has to flow.

A phase of traditional revolutions has been disintegration of an old order in various ways and by various means. One of the most important factors in the disintegration of Czarist society in 1917 was Lenin’s counsel to the Russian soldiers to “vote with your feet” and go home. He told them that the defeat of “their own nation” in war was a lesser evil. Now there is sense of a kind in general dislocation in such a situation, *provided* that there is an element in the situation that wants to take power, and may perhaps be able to, and is ready to undertake building a new society and a new center of power. The Bolsheviks were in that position in 1917.

Assuming for the sake of argument that such an overturn were desirable, who are the elements that are to accomplish this in the United States today? Malcolm X and his followers? Even moderately informed people know that the civil-rights issue, the economic or job issue and the Cold War issue are linked together. They know that without labor and other elements joining in the struggle even integration as such cannot be achieved. But any such cooperation of various elements exists today only in the most embryonic sense. To base the tactics of the civil-rights movement on the assumption that a traditional revolution is imminent in the United States is either mad or criminal. In the present state of things there has to be some fairly obvious connection between a demonstration and a specific not infinitely remote goal.

In general, there is no coherent or generally recognized theory as to how or whether a revolution like the historic ones can take place in a country like the United States in the nuclear age. For all thoughtful people, and certainly for those who espouse nonviolence, or at least conceive of its possible relevance, the question of what “revolution” means in our time is posed.

The traditional revolution centers around the transfer of power from one class or social element to another, and results in the setting up of a new power structure. It is well to remind ourselves at this moment when a good many seem to think that nothing “real” is taking place except where there is shooting, that in their early stages traditional revolutions were often remarkably free from violence. Essentially, the old order collapsed and the new element moved in to fill a vacuum. The large-scale violence was likely to come when counter-revolutionary efforts were staged.

It is also the case that revolutions were in their beginnings idealistic. They were to bring in a new order of “liberty, fraternity, equality” or “a class-less and war-less world.” In no sense did the masses realize in the early stages that a new power structure to dominate society was going to be set up. There would not have been sufficient emotional motivation for the great venture and

arduous labors of revolution if people had not believed that liberation and not just another variety of bondage was in sight.

### The Beloved Community

The believers in nonviolence (and at least some who do not think of themselves in those terms) do not see the task of our age as that of seizure of power by a new social element and the setting up of a new power structure. They see the task of our age as that of building the beloved community. No one can have a fairly close contact with the civil-rights movement and the people in it, including the young people, without feeling that, in spite of all contrary appearances and even realities in the movement, deep near its center is this aspiration for a beloved community and the faith that this is what they are working for and already in a sense realizing now. "O, Freedom, Freedom over me." "Deep in my heart I do believe that we shall overcome some day"—not overcome the white man, but overcome that which stands in the way of man, each man.

In the meantime, regardless of whether or not one embraces nonviolence either as revolutionary strategy or as a way of life, all the available evidence points to the conclusion that nonviolence as basic strategy should not be abandoned by the civil-rights movement. Rather, mistakes should be corrected and new possibilities of developing nonviolent action should be diligently explored and experimented with. It seems essential that the decision to adhere to nonviolence be a firm one and that it be clearly and openly proclaimed. The present situation, where there is considerable difference of opinion in various sections of the movement and a tendency for many of the adherents of nonviolence to weaken in their stand, while the advocates of "self-defense" and "true revolution" are (or seem to be) certain of their stand and aggressive in their attitude, is the worst possible. If the latter are right, their strategy should be generally accepted. Some of them might be shocked if it were accepted. If their policy is not adopted, those who reject it should not be intimidated by its advocates.

There is no space here to make detailed suggestions as to tactics. Moreover, the civil-rights movement has in the leaders of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, CORE, and in one of our editors, Bayard Rustin, persons who are brilliant and masterful in this field. Three general suggestions do seem to me worth recording.

In the first place, the opponents of nonviolence tend to gain a following among the more depressed and poverty-stricken elements in the Negro ghettos. There are a number of reasons for this, but one of the main reasons is that the "nationalists" and others pay attention to these elements and at least appear to offer programs they think can improve their condition. I think more attention to them, as against what might be called Negro white-collar elements, might produce results. Rent strikes and unemployed actions would presumably appeal to them more than actions related to education or electing Negroes to Congress or even voter registration.

Secondly, there are indications that training for nonviolent action is being taken more seriously than it has been, but much more needs to be done immediately in this field.

Thirdly, while there is a tendency in parts of the white community to polarize into a hostile or disillusioned position because of alleged "extremist" action by Negroes, there are also many who become increasingly troubled and eager to help. Very large sections of the nation are capable of experiencing deep moral revulsion against racism and segregation, especially when Negro nonviolent demonstrators are brutally treated, as was shown in relation, e.g., to the Birmingham struggle. In my view, that moral revulsion may have been the main factor in at last impelling

Kennedy to submit a civil-rights bill and the House actually to adopt a stronger one than Kennedy's. It is my impression that the nonviolent movement may have been distracted from paying sufficient attention to the involvement of whites on this moral ground.

In closing as in beginning an analysis of this kind, attention must be focused on the white community. I referred earlier to the chasm between the peoples who have known humiliation as peoples and those who have not, but have humiliated others. The latter are the West Europeans and the Americans. The chasm has for the most part kept the (colored and white) peoples separated from each other. It is so no longer. The chasm is going to be bridged somehow. From the side of white men a bridge of understanding, repentance, reconciliation and love might be thrown across the chasm. If this is not done, a bridge of pent-up frustration, vengeance, hate may be thrown across it by the majority of the human race. Those who over centuries dug the chasm would hardly be in a position to quarrel with the effect. But this would not be building the beloved community either. It would be opening another familiar cycle of domination and eventual corruption. This might prove suicidal for all in the nuclear age.

Therefore, Negroes of whom love cannot be "demanded" by whites—love is in any case not subject to demand—may nevertheless give it. Those who have so long known what it is to be shoved off the sidewalk by whites may possibly understand what it means to the latter to be shoved into the street. If by discrimination and hate Negroes are driven to discrimination and hate, what, after all have they done to themselves? There is no virtue or healing in following a bad example. There are Negroes who know this: whites are not needed to teach it to them. It was in Jackson, Mississippi last year that the widow of Medgar W. Evers said to her fellow-Negroes at a Memorial services for her slain husband: "You mustn't hate; you must love."

The poet, Mark Van Doren was asked recently to read his poem entitled "Born Brother?" to a gathering of writers. He first exclaimed: "Ah, yes. Equality—the greatest of all doctrines and the hardest to understand." Then he read:

"Equality is absolute or no.  
Nothing between us can stand  
    we are the sons  
Of the same sire, or madness  
    breaks and runs  
Through the rude world."

The venerable Jewish philosopher, Martin Buber, referring mainly to relations between nations, uttered an appeal some years ago, which is applicable in a peculiarly poignant way to the race situation. He spoke of those in whatever camp who "carry on the battle against the anti-human," and said: "those who build the great unknown front shall make it known by speaking unreservedly with one another, not overlooking what divides them but determined to bear this division in common."

*From: Liberation, May 1964, p7-12.*



## ***NONVIOLENCE IN AMERICAN HISTORY***

Before the American Revolution, nonviolence in this country was virtually synonymous with Quakerism. There were other pacifist sects, of course: John Woolman recorded in his Journal the case of a Mennonite who slept in the woods rather than receive hospitality from a slaveholder. But the Quakers were more numerous, and as the English wing of the radical Reformation more in touch with the thinking of the English majority in the American colonies than German pietists could hope to be. Thus it fell to the Friends to introduce to American history “nonviolence as a way of life.”

Sharing Roger Williams’ objection to compulsion in religion as “forcible and soul rape,” Quakers objected to other forms of force, too. When George Fox was asked to serve in the English army, he and five other Friends declared: “We utterly deny all outward wars and strife and fighting with outward weapons, for any end or pretense whatever; this is our testimony to the whole world.” More than three hundred years later, the Friends Peace Committee of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting published a pamphlet called Public Witness, whose cover showed an elderly gentleman carrying a sign which read: “Quakers believe that there is in every man and woman the ability to respond to God’s love.” In the 17<sup>th</sup> as in the 20<sup>th</sup> century the belief in an “inner light,” in “that of God in every man,” underlay the Quaker refusal to resort to violence.

There was nothing respectable or middle-class about this position then. In 1660 an act of Virginia referred to the Friends as an

“unreasonable and turbulent sort of people, teaching and publishing lies, miracles, false visions, prophecies and doctrines, which have influence upon the communities on men both ecclesiasticall and civil endeavoring and attempting thereby to destroy religion, lawes, communities and all bonds of civil societie, leaving it arbitrarie to everie vaine and vitious person whether men shall be safe, lawe established, offenders punished, and Governours rule, hereby disturbing the publike peace and just interest.”

While this was being said in Virginia, Quakers were mounting a nonviolent invasion of Massachusetts Bay. In July, 1656 Mary Fisher and Ann Austin arrived in Boston. They were deported, but two days after their ship sailed out eight more Friends sailed in.

“These formidable zealots carried the battle to the Puritans, avoiding devious means of spreading their message. They attempted to speak after the sermon in church, made speeches during trials and from jail windows during imprisonments, issued pamphlets and tracts, held illegal public meetings, refused to pay fines, and refused to work in prison even though it meant going without food.”

Again and again Quakers returned to the Bay Colony, despite whippings and executions. “While William Leddra was being considered for the death penalty, Wenlock Christison, who had already been banished on pain of death, calmly walked into the courtroom. And while Christison was being tried, Edward Wharton, who also had been ordered to leave the colony or lose his life, wrote to the authorities from his home that he was still there.”

This early experiment in nonviolence, to use Gandhi’s phrase, was successful.

“The jailer’s fees were often paid by sympathetic citizens and food was brought to the prisoners through the jail window at night. A number of colonists were converted to Quakerism by witnessing the suffering. For example, Edward Wanton, an officer of the guard at the execution of Robinson and Stephensen, was so impressed that he came home saying, ‘Alas, mother! We have been murdering the Lord’s people.’

“When Hered Gardner prayed for her persecutors after her whipping, a woman spectator was so affected that she said, ‘Surely if she had not the support of the Lord she could not do this thing.’

“Governor Endicott was not so easily moved. When Catherine Scott indicated her willingness to die for her faith, the Governor replied, ‘And we shall be as ready to take away your lives, as ye shall be to lay them down.’ But the protest against the treatment of the Quakers continued to grow.

“After William Brend had been so cruelly beaten that he seemed about to die, even Governor Endicott became so alarmed at the attitude of the people that he announced that the jailer would be prosecuted. The later execution of a woman, Mary Dyer, added to the discontent, and even the General Court began to weaken. Virtual abolition of the death penalty followed; there were problems in getting the constables to enforce laws which became ever milder.”

“By 1675,” this account concludes, “Quakers were regularly meeting undisturbed in Boston.”

Shortly thereafter William Penn pioneered a different application of nonviolence in Pennsylvania. There were prudential as well as idealistic motives in Penn’s approach to the Indians. He wrote to the commissioners who went before him to Pennsylvania: “Be tender of offending the Indians, and hearken by honest spies, if you can hear that any body inveigles them not to sell, or to stand off, and raise the value upon you.” On the other hand, the treaty with the Delawares had many elements characteristic of nonviolence, such as the agreement that before either side believed a rumor it would go to the other and inquire. At the treaty the Indians are said to have given Penn a belt of wampum which (like the emblem of the twentieth century Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) showed a white man and a dark man clasping hands. Moreover, it seems not only that nonviolence kept the peace in Pennsylvania for two generations, but also that Quakers were spared by the Indians when, in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, warfare between the colony and the Indians began. The influential English Quaker of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Jonathan Dymond, passed on to his abolitionist readers the tradition that Friends who refused to arm themselves or to retire to garrisons were left unharmed by the Indians.

Pennsylvania’s decision to arm against the Indians prompted another form of nonviolent action: the refusal of several Friends to pay taxes for military purposes. The issue pitted against each other John Woolman and Anthony Benezet, the most influential American Quakers of the eighteenth century, and Benjamin Franklin, who led the non-Quakers of Pennsylvania in insisting on military preparations. Symbolized by the confrontation of these leaders was the conflict between Quaker nonviolence and the dominant philosophy of Locke. Locke was contemptuous of those whose scruples over violence allowed tyranny to exist. Thus in his Second Treatise on Government Locke declared:

“If the innocent honest man must quietly quit all he has for peace’s sake to him who will lay violent hands upon it, I desire it may be considered what a kind of peace there will be in the

world which consists only in violence and rapine, and which is to be maintained only for the benefit of robbers and oppressors. Who would not think it an admirable peace betwixt the mighty and the mean, when the lamb, without resistance, yielded his throat to be torn by the imperious wolf?"

Probably at no other time in American history was nonviolence so alien to the mainstream of American social thought as in the Revolutionary generation.

The War for Independence increased the unpopularity of pacifism. Franklin once more spoke for the majority when (according to John Adams' diary) he proposed as a seal for the United States, "Moses lifting up his wand, and dividing the red sea, and Pharaoh in his chariot overwhelmed with the waters [and] this motto, 'Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God'." Benezet, again, expressed the feeling of the Quaker minority in a letter of 1779 to the President of the Continental Congress, John Jay. Those who refused military service for the sake of conscience, Benezet affirmed, were "really concerned for the true welfare of America, but willing to sacrifice their all, rather than do that whereby they apprehend they may offend that great and good Being, from whom alone they look for any permanent happiness for themselves or their afflicted country."

## II

The Lockean Franklin and his Quaker antagonists were united, however, in their concern to abolish slavery. Woolman made long journeys through the South admonishing Quaker slaveholders, and refused to use the products of slave labor. Benezet founded a school for the instruction of free Negroes. In 1790 the aged Franklin set his name at the head of a petition against slavery to the new United States Congress. Southern Congressmen responded by extended reference to the pacifism of Quakers during the Revolution, insisting that the "self-constituted" Society of Friends not be permitted to disturb sectional harmony. "The Northern States adopted us with our slaves," declared Representative Burke, "and we adopted them with their Quakers." The clash between the Founding Fathers' pragmatic acceptance of slavery and the "fanatical" objections of the Quakers was to reappear writ large in the decades after 1830.

Abolitionism, as it developed in the context of religious revivalism, was at first committed to non-violence. Nathaniel Macon, Congressman from North Carolina, wrote to a friend in 1818: "We have abolition, colonization, bible and peace societies. The character and spirit of one may without injustice be considered that of all." In 1815-1860, as in the years since World War II, peace and civil rights organizations attracted the same people. Samuel May and William Ellery Channing were advocates of peace before they became abolitionists. Anti-slavery stalwarts Henry C. Wright, Edmund Quincy, Maria W. Chapman, Lucretia Mott and Lydia Marie Child joined William Lloyd Garrison in launching the New England Non-Resistance Society. Frederick Douglass denounced "the whole naval system" and capital punishment. Charles Sumner made his political debut by condemning war before a Fourth of July audience on the Boston common, and in 1849, in a speech called "War System of the Commonwealth of Nations," produced the most comprehensive indictment of war by any American in the nineteenth century. Elihu Burritt, tireless advocate of an individual peace pledge and a general strike against war, spent himself also on plans to prevent Civil War by compensated emancipation. William Jay, Lewis Tappan and Theodore Parker were others prominent in both the peace and anti-slavery movements.

The manifesto of the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1833 espoused non-violence in almost the same language as the declaration of the New England Non-Resistance Society in 1838:

a natural outcome, since Garrison wrote both. Nor was this nineteenth century non-violent movement confined to words. Direct action against railroad segregation began almost coincidentally with railroads themselves, in New England, New York and Pennsylvania. Assisting fugitive slaves was “constructive work” in the best Gandhian sense.

Garrisonian non-violence, like the pacifism of Anthony Benezet, was open to the charge that it salved the conscience of the individual but failed to change the structure of power. Garrison explicitly disavowed the example of the French Revolution: “We advocate no jacobinical doctrines. The spirit of Jacobinism is the spirit of retaliation, violence and murder.” The American Anti-Slavery Society asked not only its members but also the slaves of the South to forego the use of violence. Its declaration said that “(we reject and) entreat the oppressed to reject the use of all carnal weapons for deliverance from bondage; relying solely upon those which are spiritual, and mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.” As the years passed and the strong-holds remained, as the wars with Mexico of 1846-1848 was followed by the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, many abolitionists began to wonder if non-violence was enough.

One of these was Garrison’s lieutenant, Wendell Phillips. In his first public speech, on the murder of abolitionist editor Elijah Lovejoy in 1837, Phillips had disassociated himself from “what are called Peace principles” and justified Lovejoy’s use of arms to protect his press. After the Fugitive Slave Law he went further: “It seems to me that the man who is not conscientiously a non-resistant, is not only entitled, he is bound, to use every means that he has or can get to resist arrest in the last resort.” Yet Phillips continued to believe in non-violent abolition until the Civil War began. Then he abandoned pacifism completely. “I think,” Phillips told a cheering audience in 1862, “the South is all wrong and the administration (of Abraham Lincoln) is all right.”

A more dramatic conversion to violence was the case of Frederick Douglass. As late as September 1849 Douglass could say: “I am willing at all times to be known as a Garrison abolitionist.” But earlier that same year Douglass had thrown Faneuil Hall into an uproar by declaring that he would welcome the news of a slave insurrection in the South. In 1854, his attitude hardened by the Fugitive Slave Law, Douglass posed the question, “Is it Right and Wise to Kill A Kidnapper?,” and answered, Yes. In 1856 Douglass said of the slave system, “its peaceful annihilation is almost hopeless.” In June 1860 the former slave came full circle, stating:

I have little hope of the freedom of the slave by peaceful means. A long course of peaceful slaveholding has placed the slaveholder beyond the reach of moral and humane considerations. . . . The only penetrable point of a tyrant is the fear of death.

Contrary to common opinion, Henry Thoreau was never a declared pacifist. The Essay on Civil Disobedience takes its stand on the American Revolution and asks: If violent revolution was right for a tax on tea, how much more would it be justified to emancipate the slaves? The essay is, in fact, a subtle and ambiguous synthesis of the previously-disparate Quaker and Lockean traditions. Thoreau like Roger Williams or William Penn affirms the peril of coercion in spiritual matters: he refused to pay a tax for the established church several years before his more celebrated refusal of the Massachusetts poll tax. At the same time Thoreau breaks with Garrison’s disavowal of Jacobinism, and flatly declares that “all men recognize the right of revolution” and that “it is not too soon for honest men to rebel and revolutionize.” Thoreau’s condemnation of all government can be misleading here. Tom Paine’s Common Sense also began with the conception that “society in every state is a blessing, but government even in its best state is but a necessary evil.” This belief did not prevent Paine from advocating a political revolution; and Thoreau

himself tells us that, speaking practically, what he wants is not no government, but a better government at once.

In the Essay on Civil Disobedience Thoreau presented individual non-cooperation with the state as “the definition of a peaceable revolution, if any such is possible.” By 1854, under the hammer of the Fugitive Slave Law, Thoreau was prepared to say: “Show me a free state, and a court truly of justice, and I will fight for them, if need be.” In 1859, speaking on the death of John Brown, Thoreau said: “I do not wish to kill nor to be killed, but I can foresee circumstances in which both these things would be by me unavoidable.” Then he went on to support Brown’s violent raid:

“It was his (Brown’s) peculiar doctrine that a man has a perfect right to interfere by force with the slaveholder, in order to rescue the slave. I agree with him. . . . I shall not be forward to think him mistaken in his method who quickest succeeds to liberate the slave. I speak for the slave when I say, that I prefer the philanthropy of Captain Brown to that philanthropy which neither shoots me nor liberates me.”

The collapse of Garrison non-violence is the most striking failure of non-violence in American history to date. One can argue endlessly whether it might have been otherwise. Should Garrison have gone into the South, like Woolman, and tried to reason with slaveholders rather than condemn them? Would it have made a difference if Burritt had developed earlier his concept of mass non-violence, as in a general strike against war? Did Phillips’ conception of individual self-defense together with mass non-violent agitation represent an untried middle road? It is idle to ask. The great and unavoidable fact is that the abolitionist movement, virtually unanimous in adhering to non-violence in the 1830’s was almost equally united in supporting Lincoln when the war came.

Garrison’s unctuous explanations for his own change of position hardly help. “Oh, Mr. President,” Garrison declared at a July 4<sup>th</sup> picnic in the first year of the war,

“how it delights my heart when I think that the worst thing we propose to do to the South is the very best thing that God or man can do! . . . Yes, we will make it possible for them to be a happy and prosperous people, as they have never been, and never can be, with slavery. We will make it possible for them to have free schools, and free presses, and free institutions, as we do at the North. . . . Let us return them good for evil, be seizing this opportunity to deliver them from their deadliest curse—that is Christian.”



*“Doug Smith and Sandy Leigh participate in voter registration canvassing”*

**VOTER REGISTRATION LAWS IN MISSISSIPPI**  
**SUBVERSION OF THE FIFTEENTH AMENDMENT IN MISSISSIPPI**

“All political power is vested in, and derived from, the people; all government of right originates with the people, is founded upon their will only, and is instituted solely for the good of the whole.”

Article 3, Bill of Rights, Section 5  
 Mississippi Constitution,  
 Adopted 1890

“Federal District Judge Harold Cox is expected to rule . . . on a Justice Department suit to speed up the processing of Negro voter applicants at Canton (Mississippi.) . . . At yesterday’s hearing Judge Cox, the first judge appointed by President Kennedy under the 1961 expansion of the Federal Judiciary, repeatedly referred to Negro applicants as a ‘bunch of niggers.’”

New York Times, March 9, 1964

“I assert that the Negro race is an inferior race. The doctrine of white supremacy is one which, if adhered to, will save America.”

United States Senator James O. Eastland  
 (from Ruleville, Mississippi)  
 June 29, 1945 in the United States Senate  
 during debate on proposed FEPC law.  
 Text in the Congressional Record.

### Introduction

For the first time in United States history Negroes are organizing across an entire state to overthrow white supremacy. In Mississippi national and local civil rights, civic and church organizations, through the Council of Federated Organizations, are pulling together for the right to demand changes in the Mississippi Way of Life.

At the same time there are whites throughout the state organizing to crush the movement for change. The dominant white supremacy group is known as the White Citizens' Councils, organized by Mississippi's "leading" citizens in 1954 to combat Negro voting rights and resist the Supreme Court school decision that same year. The Citizens' Councils now maintain a firm stranglehold on the governorship, the state legislature and the federal and state courts. They control local and state education throughout most of the state, and dominate the economic base and activity in the state.

Ten years ago Mississippi Senator James Eastland called for state-organized defiance of any federal efforts to ensure equal rights for Negroes. (The speech, titled "We've Reached Era of Judicial Tyranny," was delivered at the first state-wide convention of the Association of Citizens' Councils of Mississippi, held in Jackson on December 1, 1955.)

"As I view the matter," Eastland said, "it is fundamental that each Southern State must adopt a State policy or State program to retain segregation, and that all the power and resources of the State be dedicated to that end."

Eastland, a cotton-rich plantation owner who controls the Senate Judiciary Committee, attacked "gradualism" as one of the great dangers to the Mississippi Way of Life.

The present condition in which the South finds itself is more dangerous than Reconstruction. It is more insidious than Reconstruction. It is more dangerous in that the present Court decisions are built on gradualism. To induce us to agree or to force us to comply step by step. In Reconstruction there was the attempt to force the hideous monster upon us all at once. Our ancestors rallied and stopped it. Its weakness then was that they attempted to enforce it all at once. It will take special precautions to guard against the gradual acceptance, and the erosion of our rights through the deadly doctrine of gradualism. There is only one course open to us and that is stern resistance. There is no other alternative. . . .

In the standard packet of literature distributed by Citizens' Council headquarters in Greenwood, Mississippi, several quotations are reprinted from a speech in 1907 by former Mississippi Governor James K. Vardaman, stating that Negroes are unfit to vote and that the Fifteenth Amendment should be repealed. (For text, see case study on the Mississippi Power Structure.)

In 1955, Lamar Smith, a Negro, was killed after urging other Negroes to vote in a gubernatorial election. He was shot to death on the Brookhaven, Mississippi courthouse lawn. A grand jury refused to indict the three men who were charged with the slaying.

In 1961, Herbert Lee, a Negro active in voter registration activities in Liberty, Mississippi was shot to death by a member of the Mississippi State Legislature. Rep. E. E. Hurst, a Citizens' Council member, was vindicated by the coroner's jury, which ruled the murder a "justifiable homicide."

In 1964, a witness to the Lee killing, Louis Allen, was shot to death near his home. Allen had been harassed by local police officials several times since the Lee killing. Local authorities there say they have not come up with any clues in the Allen killing.

In 1962, Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer of Ruleville, Mississippi was fired from her plantation job, where she had worked for 18 years, the same day she had gone to the county courthouse to attempt to register. The plantation owner had informed her that she had to leave if she didn't withdraw her application for registration.

Leonard Davis of Ruleville was a sanitation worker for the city until 1962, when he was told by Ruleville Mayor Charles M. Dorrough, "We're going to let you go. Your wife's been attending that school." Dorrough was referring to the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee voter registration school in Ruleville.

Marylene Burkes and Vivian Hillet of Ruleville were severely wounded when an unidentified assailant fired a rifle through the window of Miss Hillet's grandparents' home. The grandparents had been active in voter registration work.

In Rankin County in 1963, the sheriff and two deputies assaulted three Negroes in the courthouse who were applying to register, driving the three out before they could finish the forms.

The recording of reprisals against Negroes who attempt to exercise their Constitutional rights, is the subject of another SNCC pamphlet, "Chronology of Violence and Intimidation in Mississippi Since 1961." In this pamphlet we will cut out and focus upon one chink in the vast race-walls which guard the Mississippi Way of Life: the web of voter registration requirements which ensnares any Mississippi Negro who would attempt to vote.

The White Citizens' Councils control most important state institutions. Without the right to vote Negroes in Mississippi have no institutionalized means of challenging the oppression by white supremacists.

It should be emphasized that the legal artillery of the State is by no means its mainline force against "uppity" Negroes trying to vote. The killings, beatings, shootings, jailings, and numerous forms of economic repression are important elements in the every-day "private" means of deterring Negroes from making it to the courthouse. The voting laws are the "public" face. This "public" face is the one we will scrutinize in this pamphlet.

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A Republic, or republican form of government, is one in which the citizens vote in order to elect representatives to make and execute decisions about how to run the government. The United States Constitution (Article 4, Section 4) guarantees to every state a republican form of government. Because the right to vote is vital to a republican form of government, the Constitution guarantees the right to vote in Article One (Section 2 and 4), and in the Fourteenth, Fifteenth and Nineteenth amendments. But since 1890 the State of Mississippi has maneuvered to deny Negroes the right to vote.

Before 1890 the Constitution and laws of Mississippi provided that all male citizens could register to vote who were 21 years of age and over, and had lived in the state six months and in the county one month. The exceptions were those who were insane or who had committed crimes which disqualified them.



In 1890 there were many more Negro citizens than white citizens who were eligible to become qualified electors in Mississippi. Therefore, in that year a Mississippi Constitutional Convention was held to adopt a new State Constitution. Section 244 of the new Constitution required a new registration of voters starting January 1, 1892. This section also established a new requirement for qualification as a registered voter: a person had to be able to read any section of the Mississippi Constitution, or understand any section when read to him, or give a reasonable interpretation of any section.

Registration in Mississippi is permanent; but if you are not registered you cannot vote. Under the new registration the balance of voting power shifted. By 1899 approximately 122,000 (82%) of the white males of voting age were registered. But only 18,000 (9%) of the Negro males qualified. Since 1899 a substantial majority of whites of voting age have become registered voters. But the percentage of Negro registered voters declined.

Between 1899 and 1952 several “public” methods were used to keep Negroes off the voter lists or out of the political process to ensure white supremacy. Many Negroes simply were not allowed to register. Literate Negroes were required to interpret sections of the Constitution to the satisfaction of a white registrar. All Negroes were excluded from the Democratic primary elections. Victory in the Democratic primary in Mississippi during this period meant victory in the general election.

In June, 1951, a U. S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that a person could register to vote if he could read OR, if unable to read, he could understand or interpret a provision of the State Constitution. A much higher percentage of voting-age Negroes were literate in 1951 than in 1890.

The Mississippi Legislators, all white, felt the Court’s decision would enable many more Negroes to register to vote. Therefore, in 1952 the State Legislature passed a joint resolution proposing an amendment to Section 244 of the 1890 Constitution. The proposed amendment would require a registration applicant to be able to read AND interpret any section of the State Constitution. The proposed amendment was placed on the general election ballot, but failure to vote on the amendment was counted as a negative vote and the amendment was not adopted.

On April 22, 1954, the State Legislature again passed a resolution to amend Section 244 of the Mississippi Constitution. This time, however, several new qualifications were included in the proposal.

First, that a person must be able to read and write any section of the Mississippi Constitution. AND give a reasonable interpretation of the Constitution to the county registrar.

Second, a person must be able to demonstrate to the county registrar a reasonable understanding of the duties and obligations of citizenship under a constitutional form of government.

Third, that a person make a sworn written application for registration on a form which would be prescribed by the State Board of Election Commissioners.

Fourth, that all persons who were registered before January 1, 1954, were expressly exempted from the new requirements.

In October, 1954, Robert B. Patterson, executive secretary of the Mississippi Citizens’ Councils, was reported to have said at a Citizens’ Council meeting, “The amendment is intended solely to limit Negro registration, “ according to University of Mississippi professor Russell H. Barrett.

The burden of the new requirements had to fall on Negroes because a substantial majority of whites were already registered and therefore exempted from the amendment. Most Negroes would still have to apply for registration and therefore have to fulfill the new requirements. In 1954 at least 450,000 (63%) of the voting-age whites were registered. Approximately 22,000 (5%) of the voting-age Negroes were registered. With 95 percent of the 472,000 eligible voters white, the proposed amendment to Section 244 was adopted on November 2, 1954. Thus, adoption of the amendment ensured that at least 95 percent of the electorate would be white.

The new requirements were to be administered by the county registrars. But, since at least 1892 all voter registrars in Mississippi have been white. (Indeed, it should be noted that since 1892 all state officials have been white.)

In January, 1955, an extraordinary session of the Mississippi Legislature was called in order that the adopted amendment to Section 244 could be inserted in the Constitution of 1890. At this session the State Legislature also passed legislation which implemented the amendment. The legislation required the interpretation test; the duties and obligations test; exempted persons registered prior to January 1, 1954; and directed the State Board of Election Commissioners to prepare a sworn written application form which the county registrars would be required to use in examining the qualifications of each applicant. In addition, the application forms were to be kept as permanent public records.

The amendment and its implementing legislation gave unlimited discretion to the county registrars in determining whether a voter registration applicant was qualified. Neither the constitutional nor the statutory provisions set any standards by which registrars should administer the tests.

Thus, Negroes in Mississippi must face a white registrar who has no legal guidelines for determining the manner in which these tests are to be administered; the length and complexity of the sections of the Constitution to be read, written and interpreted by the applicants; the standard for a reasonable interpretation of any section of the Mississippi Constitution; the standard for a reasonable understanding of the duties and obligations of the citizenship; nor a standard of performance by the applicant in completing the application form.

The registrar has 285 sections of the 1890 Constitution from which to choose, some of which are as complicated as the question of the leases dealing with land purchases from the Choctaw Indians.

A 1963 Omnibus Suit challenging Mississippi's voting laws, filed in Federal Court by the Justice Department, maintains, "There is no rational or reasonable basis for requiring, as a prerequisite to voting, that a prospective elector, otherwise qualifies, be able to interpret certain of the sections of the Mississippi Constitution."

The suit further states,

. . . Registrars . . . have used, are using, and will continue to use the interpretation test and the duties and obligations test to deprive otherwise qualified Negro citizens of the right to register to vote without distinction of race or color. The existence of the interpretation test and the duties and obligations test as voter qualifications in Mississippi, their enforcement, and the threat of their enforcement have deterred, are deterring and will continue to deter otherwise qualified Negroes in Mississippi from applying for registration to vote.

But the suit does not stop at the voting qualifications themselves in attacking the efforts to keep Negroes from voting. The suit argues that since Negroes have been denied an equal public

education, the state does not have the right to turn around and demand interpretation and understanding tests which reflect the quality of public education.

In a state where public education facilities are and have been racially segregated and where those provided for Negroes are and have been inferior to those provided for white persons, an interpretation or understanding test as a prerequisite to voting, which bears a direct relationship to the quality of public education afforded the applicant violates the Fifteenth Amendment.

But the state of Mississippi was not through erecting barriers to Negro suffrage. In 1960, the Mississippi legislature passed a joint resolution to amend Article XII of the Constitution of 1890 to include a new qualification, good moral character, to the list of qualification to vote. On November 8, 1960, the new section (241-A) was adopted by the Mississippi electorate. Of the approximately 525,000 registered voters in Mississippi who were eligible to vote on this proposed amendment, about 95 percent were white, fewer than five percent were Negro.

As in the cases of the other qualifications, the new amendment exempts most of the voting age whites from the requirement and includes most voting age Negroes.

Ole Miss professor Russell Barrett stated in 1964 that during the campaign on the moral character amendment in 1960 the Jackson, Mississippi, State-Times editorialized, "This proposed amendment is not aimed at keeping white people from voting, no matter how morally corrupt they may be. It is an ill-disguised attempt to keep qualified Negroes from voting and as such, it should not have the support of the people of Mississippi."

During the 1960 legislative session another bill was passed to enable registrars to destroy registration records. [In 1955]\*

In 1957 Congress passed the Civil Rights Act which provided that the Attorney General of the United States bring civil action to protect the right to vote without distinction of race or color. In 1960 Congress passed another Civil Rights Act which required that all records and papers related to registration, poll tax payments, and any other matters pertaining to voting in federal elections be preserved for a certain period. The Act also provided that these records be made available to the United States Attorney General for inspection and copying.

While the Congress debated Title III of the 1960 Civil Rights Act, which pertained to the registration records, the Mississippi Legislature first passed a resolution praising the fight against the Civil Rights Bill, then amended the Mississippi Code (Section 3209.6) to permit the destruction of registration records 30 days after the filing of the application form. The statute now permitted registrars to destroy evidence of discrimination against Negro applicants should Justice Department Officials want to photograph the records. The law was deliberately aimed at undermining Title III (1960 Civil Rights Act), a procedure which the Supreme Court has ruled violates Article VI of the Constitution of the United States.

In the spring of 1962 the State Legislature adopted another package of bills designed to thwart growing efforts by Negroes to register and vote.

Prior to this new legislation in 1962, the Mississippi Code (Section 3213) required that an applicant fill out the application form without assistance or suggestion from any person. The new legislation (House Bill 900) amended that section, making the requirements of the statute mandatory; requiring that no application can be approved or the applicant registered if any blank on the application form is not "properly and responsively" filled out by the applicant; and required that both the oath in the application and the application must be signed separately by the applicant.

The purpose of House Bill 900 was to prevent anyone, including the registrar, from giving the slightest suggestion about what was required on the application form. Thus, the applicant could be rejected because of the most inconsequential omission on the application form.

Another bill in the package (House Bill 901) amended the Mississippi Code so that designation of race could be eliminated from the county poll books. The purpose was to hinder Justice Department efforts to document the inability of Negroes to get on the registration rolls.

House Bill 905 amended the Mississippi Code to require the State Board of Election Commissioners to provide space on the application form where the applicant must put information which establishes his good moral character. It also required the registrar to use the good moral character requirement in regis[tration]\*

The 1963 Omnibus Suit attacks both the 1960 Constitutional amendment and its 1962 statutory complement as “vague and indefinite,” giving registrars “unlimited discretion . . . to determine the good moral character of applicants for registration . . . (but) neither suggests nor imposes standards for the registrar’s use in determining good moral character.

Therefore, the Suit states, the registrar can determine:

What acts, practices, habits, customs, beliefs, relationships, moral standards, ideas, associations, attitudes and demeanor (indicate) bad moral character and what weight should be given to each.

What is evidence of good moral character and what weight should be given to affirmative evidence of it, such as school record, church membership, military service, club memberships, personal, social and family relationships, civic interest, absence of criminal record.

What sources, if any, such as public records, public officials, private individuals—Negro and white—will be consulted in determining the character of the applicant; or whether the determination will be made on the basis of personal knowledge, impression, newspaper accounts, rumor or otherwise.

But the all-white State Legislature did not intend to leave character investigation and judgment to the white registrar alone. House Bills 822 and 904 required disclosure of every applicant to public scrutiny so that any citizen might come forward to challenge the applicant’s qualifications.

The two statutes required that within 10 days after application any already-qualified elector in the county may challenge in an affidavit the good moral character of any applicant, or any other qualification of the candidate for registration. Then, within seven days after such an affidavit is filed by a ‘concerned’ citizen, the registrar must notify the applicant of the time and place for a hearing to determine the validity of the challenge. The registrar retains the discretion to change the date of the hearing.

The registrar is authorized to issue subpoenas to compel the attendance and testimony of witnesses. The testimony is recorded and then the registrar may either decide the validity of the challenge or take the challenge under consideration. Courtroom rules of testimony are not enforced at these hearings and both the applicant and the challenger may question witnesses. Either the challenger or the applicant may appeal to the county board of election commissioners, if the registrar decides against him in the hearing.

The cost of the hearings are taxed in the same way that costs are taxed in the State chancery courts: the all-white county board can decide whether the contestants must share the costs, or the one who is decided against must pay all of it.

The statutes further provide that if no challenge to the applicant's qualifications is filed, the registrar shall determine the nature of the applicant's moral character and other qualifications "within a reasonable time." Thus, if there is no challenge by a private citizen, there is nothing in the statutes which forces the registrar to come to a decision about the application.

Let's suppose the registrar finds the applicant qualified. House Bill 903 requires that the registrar write the word "passed" on the application form. However, the applicant is still not registered unless he comes back in person to the registrar and asks the result of his application. The bill places the burden of responsibility on the applicant to return to the registrar's office.

This requirement must be seen in the light of the murders and beatings of Negroes which have taken place in the courthouse or on its steps in connection with voter registration efforts.

For another example, suppose that the applicant was ruled to have good moral character, but the registrar decided the applicant has not fulfilled one or more of the other requirements. The statute requires that the registrar write "failed" on the application. The registrar, however, must not specify the reasons for failure, because to do so "may constitute assistance to the applicant on another application."

The statute also provided that if the registrar decides the applicant has fulfilled all requirements except that of good moral character, the registrar writes that on the application form and the reasons why he finds the applicant not to be a good moral character.

If the registrar decides the applicant has not fulfilled one or more of the other requirements, and is not of good moral character, the registrar writes "failed" on the application and has the discretion to write on the application, "not of good moral character."

This is the "public" mask worn for the outside world to explain why Negroes are not registered in large numbers in Mississippi. The 1963 Omnibus Suit asks the Federal Court to declare all these registration requirements unconstitutional, except those which were largely provided prior to 1890. Those requirements are that the applicant be a citizen of the United States; 21 years of age or over; a resident of Mississippi, the county and election district for the period outlined in the Constitution of 1890; be able to read; that the applicant not have been convicted of any of the disqualifying crimes described in the Constitution and Code of Mississippi; and that the applicants not be insane.

Negroes are now trying to tear away this legal mask to expose the real basis of white supremacy. Without the right to register and vote Negroes cannot take part in any phases of Mississippi's form of republican government. What recourse do the white supremacists leave Mississippi Negroes, if Negroes cannot voice their opinions at the polls?

*[\* Editors' Note: At two places in the document, both at the end of pages, the text breaks off. Judging from the flow of the text, and since both copies of the document that we could find are identical (in the SNCC papers and the Ellin papers in the Civil Rights in Mississippi Digital Archive, see <http://anna.lib.usm.edu/uhtbin/cgiisirs/dlvtmTQ2yW/312050011/523/3173>), we assume that these are typos, rather than a sign of missing pages.]*

*"Voter Registration Laws in Mississippi" was written by the SNCC Research Staff (according to the Lesson Plan for Unit 7)*

### ***CASE STUDY ON THE CIVIL RIGHTS BILL***

Why was a Civil Rights Bill proposed in 1963?

What forces will contribute to its passage?

A. No civil rights legislation was part of President Kennedy's program for the 1963 Congressional session. Yet by June it was called top priority. This was obviously related to the demonstrations in Greenwood, Birmingham, etc. President Kennedy expressed two basic themes in explaining the need for his proposed bill:

1. the moral necessity of solving the problem of civil rights—of giving everyone an equal chance;
2. the necessity of granting Negroes their rights through law so that they would not have to continue to resort to the streets.

A third reason, this one unexpressed, may have been political: much criticism of the federal government grew out of the movement. It was directed primarily at the executive branch (e.g. that the F.B.I. should be more active in civil rights, that federal marshals should protect demonstrators and civil rights workers, that the President should openly commit himself, etc.). This put the President in a difficult situation: if he granted the demands of civil rights leaders, he would be accused of "going too fast on civil rights" (by other forces). This is a charge that seems to swing weight with white masses. (At this point it might be valuable to examine the Lou Harris poll of whites, the results of which were published in Newsweek in August or September of 1963. It is quite a revealing article and would be worth the cost of obtaining.) On the other hand, if the President did nothing, he would risk losing the Negro vote which gave him his office (documentation of this political fact and another piece of interesting and valuable reading is found in chapters on the Negro vote in White's Making of a President, 1960). How could he please both factions? Reducing it to simple terms, he "passed the buck" to Congress, by proposing a civil rights bill. This way he could appear to Negroes a champion of new measures—but conservatives could not place all the blame on him; after all, it would be Congress, not he that made the bill into law. Some debate can follow by the students as to whether this gambit succeeded or not. Also, there might be discussion on how civil rights forces can prevent President Johnson from resting on the laurel of "having got the civil rights bill through Congress." How can we once again put the burden for acting on the executive?

B. If we call part "A" above a surface analysis of why the Bill was proposed, it should be interesting to look below the surface and try to answer the questions of why it suddenly became dangerous to have Negroes in the streets, why it became time to have a moral treatment of civil rights, and why it became politically desirable to take action in the field. Students should be encouraged to discuss the problem, with the following guidelines:

1. Demonstrations. What causes massive street demonstrations? What was the role of civil rights organizations? Of "outside agitators"? Was it a build-up process that took years? How are they affected by the reaction of the local police?
2. Negro writers, especially Baldwin. Excerpts (or all) of The Fire Next Time might be read and the students asked to analyze its effect on Negro readers and on white readers. What was (is) the importance of his writing? If time is available, they might take a comparative look at some of the writings of DuBois. If they compare favorably with Baldwin's, why

- did they not produce a revolution? Or is a revolution something that takes fifty years to produce, and is DuBois as much responsible as Baldwin for it?
3. American foreign relations. Are they a factor in civil rights bill passage? How? Would there be a civil rights bill if there was no communist "threat"?
  4. The African revolution. What is the relationship between the African revolution and the American Negro's?

Students can be encouraged to discuss their own feelings about African independence. Does it contribute to their feelings about their position here?

The effect of African independence on U. S. foreign policy and through that channel on the civil rights bill should be explored. How many U.N. votes do African nations have? What is the United States interest in keeping Africa from "Going Communist"?

Out of this discussion (B, 1, 2, 3 above) should come some awareness in the students' minds as to the complexity of the question of what makes historic events happen. This might even be a question worth pursuing in class. How would the Negro revolution have fared during the depression? If colonialism was not in retreat? If there were not a USSR? Or are these things irrelevant? Can a determined people put across a valid idea at any time in history? Or must an idea wait until its time has come?

C. 1. By now the student should have some idea of the forces that helped create the Bill. A separate question is what forces can be exerted and have been exerted to insure its passage, and what lessons can be learned from the success or failure of the various techniques.

The basic question, I think should be gotten at this point, involves demonstrations, which played a major role in influencing debate. (Note: few demonstrations can be recalled which have as their ostensible and immediate object the influencing of Congressional action. Yet every racial demonstration, whatever its immediate purpose, has this effect. The students should understand this and should understand why this is so.) The question is: what are the effects of "unruly," "irresponsible" or "ill-conceived" demonstrations? And, when does a demonstration become "irresponsible"? This question is worth considering not only because of its relevancy to the civil rights bill but because of its general relevance to the tactical planning involved in the movement.

The problem came into the open after the CORE proposal to create an enormous traffic jam in New York on the opening of the World's Fair by deliberately allowing their cars to run out of gas while on crowded thoroughfares. This plan was severely condemned, even by Movement leaders. But what is important in the present context is that two liberal Senators, perhaps the strongest supporters of the Bill in the Senate, Humphrey (D-Minn.) and Kuchel (R-Calif.) issued a joint statement warning that such actions could imperil the passage of the bill. According to the New York Times (April 15) the Senators said:

The right of petition is a basic right in America, but it is also basic to our system of government that there must be respect for the law.

No one can condone violation of law. The main reason we are advocating the civil rights bill is because too many states and too many individuals are defying the law of our Constitution and are denying Constitutional rights to our fellow citizens.

They added that civil rights advocates could help their cause best if they conducted "their peaceful crusade with the same good manners, forbearance and devotion so abundantly displayed in the March on Washington."

Violence is the antitheses of law and order. Illegal disturbances, demonstrations which lead to violence or to injury, strike grievous blows at the cause of decent civil rights legislation. Unruly demonstrations bring hardship and unnecessary inconvenience to others. And even though the participants have “long suffered indignities, they are not helping the cause of civil rights. Indeed, they are hurting our efforts in Congress to pass an effective civil rights bill.”

Some questions the students could discuss with reference to this problem are: Do the Senators really think the demonstrations will hurt the passage of the bill, or are they using this as a threat to discourage tactics of which they are fearful? If they do really think so, how do they think this adverse affect will come about? Do they believe that the white majority will be alienated against the Negro? How can the white majority affect the Bill? If this alienation can defeat the Bill, does this mean that it could also defeat the movement? The question that underlies these is one that is central to movement strategy, i.e., does the movement need the sympathy of the majority of white America to succeed best, or can it succeed best by forcing America to accept its demands even though the majority is alienated by the tactics of force?

Perhaps the “unruliest” of all demonstrations was the rioting in Jacksonville, Florida. See article on that riot in Newsweek magazine (April 6, 1964). Does the article indicate that the riots hampered or helped the Bill’s passage, in the opinion of the author? It seems to me that the author feels such outbreaks should spur the relief sought, yet riots must certainly alienate the white masses. It is clearly possible that some gains can be made through alienating tactics. But can or should they be used exclusively?

C. 2. Another method that is frequently used by the movement to affect legislation is letter-writing. As Congressmen and Senators are supposed to represent their constituents, they are theoretically influenced by the desires expressed by those people. In a practical sense, the influence of the letter obviously stems from the fact that each letter may represent one or more votes. One of the consequences of the disfranchisement of Mississippi Negroes is that their letters to their own Congressmen do not have the force of communication from a voter. Their letters to Congressmen from other states may have some effect. A letter to an undecided Senator might have the effect of convincing him personally that the Bill is needed. Or if he was already so convinced but was afraid to vote for the Bill because he thought his constituents opposed it, he might use such letters to convince them that they were mistaken about the Bill. A possible writing exercise would be letters to uncommitted Senators (if the Bill is not passed by this time).

### C. 3. Lobbying, Pressure groups, etc.

Lobbying is a technique of influencing legislation which has been used to affect the civil rights bill, but not to a great extent. I do not think that either the pro or anti-Bill forces have actually hired lobbyists to work for them. (All lobbyists who are salaried are required by law to register with the federal government and to record the name of the concern or group which is paying them.) However, some informal, non-professional lobbying has likely been done by both sides. Bill Higgs, for example, a lawyer who is not currently employed, maintains an office in Washington, D. C. and frequently meets with Congressmen in attempts to influence their votes. The methods of lobbyists are surprisingly varied: Higgs once had a party for several Congressmen to which he also invited Bob Dylan—and asked Dylan to sing his pro-civil rights



songs. Representatives of the Citizens' Councils or their sympathizers have also been similarly at work on uncommitted Congressmen.

The question of the propriety of lobbying has long been debated—the students should be made aware of the issues involved. The argument on one side is that lobbying is frequently the tool of interest groups with limited popular support but a great deal of money (e.g., the oil industry) who are able to influence legislation with theater tickets, dinners, or campaign contributions. The counter argument is that lobbyists are necessary as a means whereby large groups can easily make their desires known to the Congress. All the members of the NAACP could not come to Washington to speak to the legislators but by maintaining a representative there they can achieve a similar result. The same might be said of the oil industry.

Related to lobbying are “pressure groups”: groups with a special interest in some legislation who seek to exercise pressure to get it passed or defeated. They might use letter-writing campaigns or picketing which we have already discussed, or they might seek to generate more widespread support for their views. This has been done by both sides of the civil rights controversy (each of which might be seen as a pressure group, to which most white Americans don't “belong” even though their sympathies might be with one or the other. To some extent each side battles for these sympathizers). Anti-civil rights forces have spent a great deal of money in Northern states on advertising and mailing campaigns to attempt to rouse antipathy for the bill. Their principal means of publicizing their arguments and of attempting to demonstrate their support has been Governor Wallace's campaign in the various Democratic presidential primaries. His campaign has been financed largely Citizens' Council money in Mississippi. The Council is supported in part by funds from the Sovereignty Commission. Thus, taxes paid by Mississippi Negroes have helped pay for the Wallace campaign. Students might want to discuss the Wallace campaign and its ramifications: What is the significance of his obtaining one fourth of the votes in two Democratic primaries and over forty percent in another? Has it helped or hurt the anti-civil rights pressure groups?

## II. The Civil Rights Bill in Congress

Rather than attempt to lay out all the facets of Congressional procedural in fighting used on the bill, I would recommend that each Freedom School be supplied with one copy of A Bill Becomes a Law, Daniel M. Berman, Macmillan Co, N. Y., 1962.

This book traces the progress of the 1960 Civil Rights Act through Congress and explains all of the procedural problems it encountered. These were by and large the same as those encountered by the present act. If the teacher of the course reads the book he can select the points he believes to be salient and should teach those to the class. If he feels it desirable to prepare some written material for the class, this can be done by mimeographing. I would suggest at least some lists of definitions of important terms, e.g. filibuster, Rules Committee, Seniority System.

The instructor should strive to get the students to understand the mechanics of American democracy. They should attempt to understand the paradox of procedures which are designed to defeat “majority rule” and yet were intended to contribute to the democratization of our society. The Supreme Court is one such device, the filibuster is another. Each protect minority rights but one has come to be more of a democratizing force than the other. Problems like this should be explored.

### III. The Civil Rights Bill Itself

A. The proposed method of teaching the contents of the Bill is first, to present the problem areas that the bill covers (e.g. voting) and have the students analyze or break down the problem area. Second, to inform the students of existing laws that purport to deal with the problem. Third, to examine the provisions of the present bill with a view toward deciding how it meets or fails to meet the problem. The students should then attempt to discover those problems with which the Bill does not deal at all.

Finally, there should be an attempt to make a general appraisal of the Bill, based on the previous discussions.

B. Title I of the Bill seeks to “enforce the constitutional right to vote.” Obviously, this right is not being enforced now in Mississippi. Why?

1. The most important reason is that the governing class of Mississippi has decided that it should not be enforced. Their reasons for so deciding are obvious but they might nevertheless be a subject for discussion by the students.

Students and teachers should have a clear understanding of what the requirements for registering are, and how they are unfairly applied.

Some idea of the magnitude of the problem is presented in the following statistics (from SRC).

State	New Voters as of 12/31/63	Total Voting Age population	White Voting Age Population	Non White Voting Age Population
Alabama	13,487	1,834,378	1,353,058	481,320
Arkansas	8,756	1,043,269	850,643	192,626
Florida	37,111	3,087,699	2,617,438	470,261
Georgia	46,347	2,409,972	1,797,062	612,910
Louisiana	5,899	1,803,805	1,289,216	514,589
<u>Mississippi</u>	<b>3,228</b>	<b>1,107,522</b>	<b>748,266</b>	<b>422,646</b>
N. Carolina	23,323	2,556,884	2,005,955	550,929
S. Carolina	20,727	1,266,251	895,147	371,104
Tennessee	34,243	2,092,891	1,779,018	313,873
Texas	120,590	5,534,277	4,884,765	649,512
Virginia	13,877	2,312,887	1,876,167	436,720
<u>Total</u>	327,588	25,112,835	20,096,735	5,016,100

Note: Voting age in Georgia is 18

State	Total Registration	White Registration	Non White Registration
Alabama	1,015,000	925,000	90,000
Arkansas	633,655	553,655	80,000
Florida	1,899,433	1,686,215	213,128
Georgia	1,405,000	1,183,181	221,919

Louisiana	1,193,775	1,031,691	162,084
<u>Mississippi</u>	<b>553,000</b>	<b>525,000</b>	<b>28,000</b>
N. Carolina	2,090,270	1,856,497	233,733
S. Carolina	814,628	703,000	111,628
Tennessee	1,500,000	1,297,026	202,974
Texas	2,020,193	1,720,183	300,000
Virginia	1,032,104	923,792	108,312
<u>Total</u>	14,157,058	12,405,240	1,751,818

State	Percent Non White of Total Registration	Percent Non White Registered of Non White Voting Age Population
Alabama	8.8	18.7
Arkansas	12.6	41.5
Florida	11.2	45.3
Georgia	15.7	36.2
Louisiana	13.5	31.4
<u>Mississippi</u>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>6.6</b>
N. Carolina	11.1	42.4
S. Carolina	13.7	30.0
Tennessee	13.5	64.6
Texas	14.8	46.1
Virginia	10.4	24.8
<u>Total</u>	11.8	35.2

The second reason voter rights are not exercised is intimidation, both private and official. Students certainly will not need to be “taught” about but they might want to express their feelings about various kinds of intimidation including the subtler forms: e.g. presence of police at court house, or the use of cameras by police. Those that have personally experienced various kinds of intimidation should be encouraged to relate them. Also, they might discuss how they would cope with the fears that potential voters have; fears of arrest, fears of firing, fears of violence.

Because of the complete racism of the Mississippi courts, Negroes must go to federal courts if they wish to have their rights judicially enforced. This route has also proven unsatisfactory, however. The primary reasons for this are first, the delay which seems to be inherent in the American court system and second, federal judges sitting in Mississippi’s two districts, Judge Mize and Judge Cox, are extreme defenders of the system and have not hesitated to use their position to advance their cause. The two factors, delay and prejudiced judges intertwine.

For example, if a case related to Negro voting is brought before one of these judges, it is taken for granted that he will rule against the Negro. But he goes one step further—he will delay the trial and then delay announcing his decision. Perhaps a year may go by from the time the suit is filed to the time it is decided. Then an appeal must be taken to the Circuit Court of Appeals.

(Note: The student would be benefited by at least a loose understanding of the courts systems of the United States. He should know that the state and federal court structures are separate but that decisions of state Supreme Courts can be reviewed by the United States Supreme Court if a Constitutional question is involved. He should also know that there are three levels in Federal Court system and that cases start in the District Courts, can be appealed to the Circuit Court of Appeals and then finally to the United States Supreme Court.) Here again it is possible to encounter segregationist judges with the consequence of more delay and the necessity of appealing to the Supreme Court. Although justice is almost certain in that court, its docket is very crowded and it is likely that another year will elapse before the final decision is made there.

Altogether, anywhere from two to four years may be involved in a suit to enforce voting rights. For example, the suit against Theron Lynd, the registrar of Forrest County (Hattiesburg) has been pending since 1961. It is only now being enforced.

So the third reason for the failure of voting rights can be considered delay in the federal courts.

## 2. The basic law existing in the area of voting is the Fifteenth Amendment.

Supreme Court interpretations of this amendment have ruled that blatant and subtle forms of voter discrimination are unconstitutional. All of Mississippi's voting laws are currently under attack as being unconstitutional in a suit filed by the Justice Department. It is likely that the suit will eventually result in the elimination of most of these laws by mandate of the Supreme Court. However, the case is currently mired at the Federal District Court level where the state is attempting to delay it. It will be two years before anything significant develops from it.

There is also some federal statutory law on the question of voting. The 1957 Civil Rights Act gave the Attorney General the power to sue to enforce non-discrimination in voting. The 1960 Act provided that where such suit was brought, and where illegal discrimination had occurred, and where the court found that the discrimination was part of a "pattern or practice" then anyone in the affected area (usually a county) who was a member of the group being discriminated against could apply to the court to be declared eligible to vote. The court, upon determining that such person was qualified to vote under the state law and that he had been denied the right to vote, could order the registrar to permit him to vote. Failure to comply with the order would be contempt of court.

The Justice Department believes that the latter type of suit, as provided by the 1960 Act is the most effective weapon it has for dealing with voting discrimination. (John Doar so informed me.) The suit in Forrest County is an example of this type.

Statutory law also exists on the question of intimidation. Sections 241 and 242 of the United States Criminal Code date back to the earliest civil rights legislation, passed just after the Civil War. Sec. 241 provides a ten-year prison sentence for any persons who conspire to injure or intimidate any person who is exercising a right secured by the Constitution. Under this law any two policemen who agreed to arrest someone for a lawful act (peaceful picketing) might be arrested and tried. Or two citizens who agreed to attack a voter registration worker might similarly be arrested.

Sec. 242 provides a one year jail sentence, for any person who acting "under color of law" (i.e. as public official of some kind) deprives any citizen of a constitutional right. An example of a violation of this law occurred when the police of Winona beat Mrs. Hamer, Annelle Ponder and Euvester Simpson for integrating the bus station. The police were tired but acquitted.

Although these laws are theoretically very powerful they have not worked out well. The Justice Department has brought very few prosecutions. They feel that the impossibility of getting convictions from Mississippi and Alabama juries makes it a waste of effort to bring these trials. Unless this problem is overcome these laws will continue to be useful only in theory.

### 3. The Provisions of the Bill

Four new rules are laid out by the Bill with regard to the standards of voting in Federal elections.

1. No standards shall be applied in determining whether a person is eligible to vote which are different than those applied to other persons in the same county who have been found eligible to vote. Thus, if white persons are registered without being given a literacy test, no such test can be given to Negroes. The probable effect of this rule will be a more stringent enforcement of existing laws against whites.

2. The right to vote may not be denied to any individual because he makes an "error or omission" on any test relating to voting. This law is designed to end the practice of some registrars who fail Negroes on the voting test because they put down an incorrect date, or misspell a word although they are nevertheless qualified. "Errors" here means a minor or inconsequential error.

3. If a literacy test is used the state must, upon the request of the individual, supply him with a copy of the test and his answers.

This rule is not very important since such records were made available to the Attorney General by the 1960 Civil Rights Act, and since it is the Attorney General who brings most voting suits. (Such records are primarily useful in bringing suits.)

4. If a literacy test is used (literacy test includes any test of the ability to read, write, understand or interpret) there is a "rebuttal presumption" that any person who has completed a sixth grade education in a state accredited school is sufficiently literate to vote in any Federal election. "Rebuttal presumption" means that the person must be considered eligible to vote unless the state can show that he is not literate. In other words, it changes the "burden of proof": the individual need not prove that he is literate (as he must at present) but the state must prove that he is illiterate.

This may have a substantial effect on the voting tests in Mississippi for Federal courts may well decide that the mere fact an individual cannot correctly interpret a section of the Mississippi Constitution does not prove he is illiterate. Therefore the constitutional interpretation test will lose its usefulness as a means of keeping Negroes from voting in Federal elections.

The hitch to this rule is that there are a number of Negro elementary schools in Mississippi which are unaccredited. People who attended these schools are not protected by the presumption.

There are two general weaknesses which pervade the sections on voting. First and most important: they deal only with Federal elections. Thus, Mississippi Negroes will be in no different a situation than they are today with regard to the right to vote in state elections.

Second, all of the new rules are of course dependent on enforcement in the courts. Like most new legislation these rules are open to various interpretations and are therefore particularly susceptible to delaying tactics in the courts.

There are provisions in the Bill that deal with the problem of delay in the courts but only in the arena of voting. The bill provides that in all voting cases the Attorney General may request that a three judge court be appointed to hear the case (as opposed to a single judge hearing it).

The three judges will be appointed by the Chief Judge of the Circuit in which the circuit is located. The Chief Judge of the Fifth Circuit, in which Mississippi is located, is Judge Tuttle. Since Judge Tuttle is pro-civil rights it is likely that the three judges he will appoint will be likewise. This will be a significant improvement over the judges (either Mize or Cox) who would sit if it were not for this provision. Under the new law it will be possible to get justice on the first judicial level. If the need for appeal to higher courts is eliminated, justice will obviously come more swiftly.

The bill also provides that after the three judges are designated they shall hear the case at the “earliest practicable date” and shall cause the case to “be in every way expedited.”

Appeals from this three judge court go directly to the Supreme Court.

### C. Public Accommodations

1. Segregation in places of public accommodation is complete in Mississippi. Again, three factors can be delineated.

First, the owners of restaurants, etc., refuse to serve Negroes. The reasons articulated are generally either that the store owner personally objects, or that he is afraid his customers will objects. Which of these can be more easily affected by law?

The class should certainly discuss the question of whether property owners should be able to discriminate. Should a private home owner? A boarding house owner? A stadium owner?

What rights in short, do we want to attach to property ownership? Students should see this question not only as a racist argument but also as a legitimate problem.

Second, state laws, though unconstitutional, are still on the books which require segregation. These are not generally enforced, per se, but the state does play a role by arresting sit-ins for breach of peace or trespass. Arrests have even occurred at some churches where police were not summoned and were not asked to make arrests. This would indicate that the state has some interest in maintaining segregation. Although the subject is a course in itself, the class may wish to spend some time on what that interest is.

Third, the threat of violence or other coercion at the hands of local whites plays here, just as in voting, an important role.

2. Before looking at the Bill we should take a look at the existing law in the area. The Supreme Court has held that no state can enforce any laws of segregation. It has also held that no agency controlled or supported by a state can be segregated. In the area of private discrimination the law is less clear. The Court has gone so far as to say that a state which has segregation laws on the books cannot arrest someone who refuses to leave a segregated place, even if the owner has asked him to leave and even if the arrest is made under a valid trespass law. Under this rule no one can at present be validly arrested for sitting-in in Mississippi.

No laws, either legislatively or judicially made, apply to a property owner’s personal rules of segregation. But an interesting query arises—of what value is the property owner’s right to discriminate if the police cannot back it up with an arrest of the trespasser?

With regard to laws relating to violence and intimidation the situation is the same as voting. Secs. 241 and 242 are at issue.

3. Provisions of the Bill (as passed by the House of Representatives). The bill (in section 201) outlaws discrimination in hotels, restaurants, gas stations, theaters, etc, whether the segregation is a result of the desire of the property owner or of state law.

Enforcement of the law must be accomplished by suing for an injunction in the Federal District Court. The suit may be brought by an individual or by the Attorney General.

How effective will the law be in Mississippi?

The Bill also attacks the problem of intimidation: Sec. 203 outlaws intimidating, threatening or punishing anyone for asserting rights to desegregation. Again, the remedy is for the threatened person or for the Attorney General to sue for injunction.

So that a man whose house is about to be bombed has a choice of calling either Jess Brown or Robert Kennedy each of whom has the right to seek an injunction against the burning from Judge Cox.

#### D. School Segregation

Although obviously illegal, school segregation obviously continues in Mississippi. This is so because of the necessity of seeking Federal court orders relating to each and every school district. This requires many lawyers, many brave plaintiffs, and long years in the court system.

Present law in the area is all the result of Supreme Court decisions, beginning with Brown v. Board of Education, the latest of which declares that the time for "deliberate speed" is over; that schools must desegregate now. In this area we have all the law we need. The problem is getting it enforced.

The Bill attempts to achieve this problem by allowing the Attorney General to bring the suit on behalf of the student or parent, if that person cannot afford to do so or cannot get legal representation, or has reason to fear retaliation. This could meet part of this problem in Mississippi, but it does not end the delay in the courts, and it is not really going to eliminate intimidation because the identity of the persons involved must eventually become known in any event.

The Bill also provides for rendering technical assistance to the school for the accomplishment of desegregation. Further it provides for short term training institutes for teachers who must deal with integration problems.

#### E. Employment

In increasing order of subtlety the means that have been used to prevent fair employment are: discriminatory hiring; discriminatory membership in labor unions; equal hiring but discrimination in promotion; hiring and promotion on an honest merit basis, but merit which necessarily relates to educational opportunities.

State legislation attempting to deal with these problems exists in many Northern states. Usually these laws make it illegal to hire discriminatorily and provide for enforcement by a state Commission which has the power to seek injunctions in the state courts.

Federal law in this area is nonexistent. President Kennedy had, by executive order, established a Fair Employment Commission (of which Lyndon Johnson was the head) whose duty it is to attempt to persuade large corporations and unions to adopt fair labor standards.

The seriousness of the job problem is emphasized by the following report from the Labor Department:

#### Unemployment

Men in Labor Market (25-64 years old) unable to find jobs:		
	<u>1948</u>	<u>1963</u>
White	22 per 1000	33 per 1000
Negro	37 per 1000	75 per 1000

So that the economic gap between Negroes and Whites has widened in the post-war years.

On advancement opportunities the Labor Department reported that among college graduates, 21% of whites ended up as owners or managers of businesses. For Negroes the figure was 7%. Among whites 00.4% of college graduates ended up as unskilled laborers. For Negroes the figure was over 2%.

The Bill undertakes to reach the employment problem in two different ways.

First, Title VI provides that there can be no discrimination of any kind in any program receiving federal financial assistance. Compliance may be secured by termination of the assistance. This would cover employment as well as other activities.

Second, Title VII makes it illegal for any employer, labor union or employment agency to discriminate in any way with regard to employment and work conditions. The enforcement of the Bill is left to an Equal Employment Opportunity Commission which is created by the act. When a complaint is filed with the Commission it must investigate and must attempt to solve the problem by "conciliation and persuasion." If that method fails the Commission must file suit to end the discrimination in a Federal District Court. The court is given the power to force the employer to hire the complainant and to make up back pay if appropriate.

To aid the Commission the Bill provides that all employers and labor unions must keep records of persons hired, lists of applicants, etc., and must report on them as the Commission directs.

The act does not affect all employers or labor unions: during the first year after passage only those with more than 100 employees or members are affected; during the second year only those with fifty or more; from then on, only those with twenty-five or more are covered.

The principal weakness of this section of the Bill will be the necessity of going to court in each and every case where a discriminatory act is alleged against a different employer or union. The possibilities for delay and evasion are boundless. In this light it should be noted that by its own terms, this Title of the Bill does not go into effect until one year after the date of its enactment.

#### F. Other Provisions.

Two other provisions are included in the Bill but are of lesser importance.

1. Title III allows the Attorney General to bring suit to desegregate state owned or operated facilities of any type. Such segregation has long been illegal, but at present only a private party can sue to enjoin it. The Attorney General will be permitted to sue only when the complainants is unable to do so because of finances or fear of intimidation.

2. Title X establishes a Community Relations Service, a commission whose duty shall be to assist communities and persons in resolving disputes relating to discrimination. The Service may offer its services in cases where "peaceful relations among the citizens of the community involved are threatened" or in other cases where the services are requested.



(Other provisions exist but they are either too legally technical or too inconsequential to be included in a course of this type.)

G. Summary

Though the type and method is up to the class and teacher, some effort should be made to summarize the Bill and the class's feelings about it.

*[This case study was written by Yale Law School graduate and SNCC field secretary Oscar Chase]*

***BEHIND THE COTTON CURTAIN***

By Charles Remsberg

As twilight crept over the hills of Mississippi's Piney Woods one evening last October, six college students climbed into their car after a day in the "niggertown" section of tiny Lumberton. The six, including two Yale divinity students, hoped to drive the 25 miles to Hattiesburg before dark. For when the cotton boll moon rises behind the long leaf yellow pine, "people down here (says a native Mississippian) sometimes lose all sense of responsibility to themselves, their consciences, their friends and their God; they become just masses of energy, and when they're mad, they'll do most anything to you." The students' car, however, would not start. Someone had poured water in the gasoline tank.

It was dark, then, and a hostile crowd started forming behind them as the six hurried apprehensively toward the Lumberton bus depot. The station was locked and deserted, the next bus due about midnight. Under the street lights, the mob grew steadily larger, attracting some men with sticks, others with knives, all spitting invective. Gruff voices punctuated the undercurrent of impending violence: "Let's stomp 'em." "They ain't got a chance." "Kill the dirty niggerlovers!" Terrified, one of the students ran to a nearby phone booth to call a local minister for help. The operator, a holdout against the dial system, refused to ring the number. "You're going to get just what you deserve!" she snapped. The line went dead. The students' world suddenly shrank to the perimeter of the angry mob. The seminarians began to pray. Seconds later a car driven by a Negro rounded the corner, and the six ran into the street and flagged him down. Pressing \$25 into his hand, they persuaded him to take them to Hattiesburg. Members of the mob ran to their cars to follow. Five miles out of town, a Highway Patrolman waved the Negro to a stop. "Get those guys out of your car, nigger," he ordered, "or I'll throw you in jail for running a taxi without a license." The Negro begged the students to leave, and they reluctantly stepped onto the blackened highway. They fled into the woods when they spotted headlights bobbing down the pavement from Lumberton.

Hours later, dodging cars that cruised back and forth on the highway in search of them, five of the students ran out and flagged down a bus to New Orleans. The sixth did not reach safety until dawn. He had separated from the others in the forest, and fearful of approaching the houses he saw, finally walked all 20 miles to Hattiesburg.

The "crime" that had rallied the official and vigilante forces of the Mississippi town and had thrown the students into the shadow of mayhem would scarcely have attracted attention in most sections of the nation.

They had gone to Lumberton to help Negroes try to register to vote in the state's gubernatorial election. But realizing it would take virtually an act of God to get Negroes registered in most Mississippi counties, they spent much of their time encouraging colored citizens to vote in a mock election promoted by the Student Non Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). The mock contest would have no legal validity whatever and could not in any way effect the outcome of the real election. It was designed merely as a crude measure of the potential voting strength of Mississippi's 450,000 eligible Negroes, the vast bulk of whom are currently disenfranchised. Everyone, black and white alike, knew the election was little more than a game.

Even so, the students at Lumberton came within a brickbat of mob violence. And in other parts of the state, less fortunate colleagues were beaten, shot at, falsely arrested and threatened

with economic disaster for participating in the campaign. The Negro druggist who ran for "governor" on this Freedom Vote ticket ended up on the chain gang, and the white Methodist minister who campaigned for "lieutenant governor" is now considered by most who know him to be living on borrowed time.

That a mere mock election could fan such public hysteria is reflective of the incredible atmosphere in Mississippi today. Behind the cotton curtain, violence is as much an accepted part of the culture as grits and beauty queens; virtually all social and political institutions are welded with white supremacist into a gigantic juggernaut to keep the Negro oppressed and segregated at all costs; the hostility toward outside "agitators" who are trying non violently to push Mississippi into the Twentieth Century is fanatical; any native member of the white community who suggests that the state's celebrated "way of life" (i.e., unbending opposition to racial integration in any form) might be altered or improved automatically becomes a "Negro" in the eyes of society and opens himself to fantastic abuse. Mississippi is, as any objective observer will tell you, a world unto itself a world, incidentally, that bears some unnerving similarities to Germany when Nazi jackboots were crashing across it in the Thirties.

Dr. James W. Silver, for 28 years a history professor at the University of Mississippi, recently offered some insights into the Magnolia State that newspaper travel sections never tell us about. His comments before the Southern Historical Association skewered modern Mississippi like a chunk of shish kabob:

"Mississippi has been on the defensive against inevitable social change for more than a century. The all pervading doctrine then and now has been white supremacy (whether achieved through slavery or segregation), rationalized by a professed adherence to states rights and bolstered by religious fundamentalism. . . .

"The romanticism associated with the Old South, the glorification of the Confederacy, and the bitter remembrances of Reconstruction have played their witless and powerful roles in preserving a social order based on neither fact nor reason. . . .

"Mississippi is deservedly famous for some aspects of its justice and for an incredible past of police brutality and for the harassment even death of those who defy the code. Many Mississippi conversations have the smack of manslaughter about them. . . .

"In public life, no white man demagogue or patrician proposes to do anything constructive about the Negro. Preferring corrupt and inefficient government to participation by the black man, the whites have achieved a one party system . . . and no means of checking the wild eyes. . . .

"With varying degrees of enthusiasm, the makers of the orthodoxy the press, the pulpit, the politicians, the philosophers, and the patriots... have rushed to the successful defense of this way of life..,

"The (typical) white man automatically distrusts new currents of thought, and if they clash with the prevailing wisdom, he ruthlessly rules them out. He cannot allow himself the luxury of thinking about a problem on its merits. In spite of what he claims, the white Mississippian is not even conservative, he is merely negative. He grows up being against most things other men at least have the pleasure to argue about. All his life he spends on the defensive. This is the Mississippi way, the Mississippi heritage. It will ever be thus as long as the closed society endures. . . ."

Another college professor told me recently: "I've said for months that things can't possibly get worse in Mississippi. But they are getting worse every day. You wonder where the bottom is."

And a Yale law school graduate, who came South to work with SNCC for \$10 a week, added: "Americans should be lying in the streets all over the country in protest of what is

happening here. We have at work in Mississippi all the abuses we are fighting when we oppose a Communist police state."

Just what drastic forms is resistance to change taking in the land of cotton? What developments and conditions are molding Mississippi into the most explosive battlefield yet in the Negro fight for equal rights? What should we know about Mississippi today that the mass media have been amazingly deficient in telling us? And what, if anything, can be done?

Let's start with the recent gubernatorial election. The issues involved and the incidents that arose tell us much about the prevailing Mississippi climate.

For the first time since Reconstruction, the Republican Party flexed its muscles in the traditionally solid Democratic arena. The GOP challenger to Governor Ross Burnett's heir apparent, Paul Johnson, was Rubel Phillips, a Jackson lawyer and former chairman of the State Public Service Commission. On giant billboards that blended in with Confederate flags and White Citizen Council placards on buildings and highways, Phillips claimed his election would "K. O. the Kennedy's" (reflecting the intense Mississippi hatred of the late President and his brothers), while Johnson's Donkey serenade was that "Paul Stood Tall at Ole Miss Last Fall" (when, as lieutenant governor, he tried to bar Negro James Meredith from integrating the state university.)

Aside from their catchy slogans, however, objective observers found little basic difference in the two candidates. Johnson, though a Democrat, was probably as anxious to "K.O." the civil rights conscious Kennedy's as his opponent and could be expected to give virtually no support to the national party. Phillips on the other hand, had himself been an avowed Democrat before starting his GOP campaign. "The only issue," a Jackson newspaper editor told me, "seemed to be which one would be 'best' on maintaining segregation and defying the federal government. And there was no real contest there, because they are equally rigid." The consensus of the persons I talked with was that the principal impetus to the Republican upsurge was a disgust with what they called "the personal bumbling of Governor Barnett," rather than disenchantment with any of the state's basic philosophies.

The way the GOP challenge was met, however, is significant in grasping the gulf between Mississippi and the rest of the U.S.

Typical of the Democrats' campaign publications was a leaflet declaring:

DANGER!

TWO PARTY SYSTEM IN MISSISSIPPI WOULD END OUR WAY OF LIFE  
VOTE NOVEMBER 5 TO STAMP OUT REPUBLICANISM!

Inside, the text observed: "To have Mississippi Democratic nominees and Republican nominees running for every public office . . . municipal, county and state... every four years . . . would constitute an unnecessary nuisance and would bring to Mississippi the same political evils and dangers that now beset such states as Illinois, New York, Michigan, Pennsylvania and California . . . Mississippi has no need for a two party system that would divide our people and stretch our political campaigning over many additional months with resulting expense, confusion and disunity . . . Let's bury these Republican 'upstarts' so deep under good, solid Mississippi Democratic votes that it will be the year 2000 before you hear of Republican candidates for Mississippi offices again!"

Conservatively stated, such pronouncements (which allegedly were reinforced by intimidation of voters, stealing of ballot boxes and raw terrorism) are a departure from the

American political philosophy that civics books discuss. The ruling Mississippi monolith made clear that it will brook no political dialogue whatever, considering any competition of ideas, any discussion of issues mild as it may be to be an "unnecessary nuisance" that might spawn "evils and dangers." One fear supposedly behind this totalitarian attitude is that a two party system such as most states enjoy might throw more weight to the relatively few registered Negro voters who, according to Democratic logic, would vote as a bloc and seize a balance of power. This is the argument the Democrats pushed publicly. Cynical observers, however, feel that the threat to perpetuation in office is the party kingpins' principal fear. The raising of the race spectre, the observers say, is an example of how Mississippi officeholders feed on public apprehension for their own benefit.

At any rate, the electorate heeded the Democrats' call for a one party system and stood tall with Paul to the tune of a nearly 2 to 1 landslide. The governor elect, speaking in Natchez, expressed irritation at the two way race and told a cheering crowd: "I assure you it will never happen again." Little wonder that there is no effective white opposition to the Democrats' racist policies in Mississippi when even a political group that agrees on the key issue of segregation is portrayed virtually as treasonous.

But what would happen to a group that offered real conflict of ideas, a group that presented a moderate view on race as well as some dialogue on the state's economic, labor, tax, and other problems? The answer can best be found in the experiences of the Freedom Vote campaigners and their mock election. But for full perspective on this project, one must first consider the plight of the Mississippi Negro who wishes to exercise his Constitutionally guaranteed right to vote.

Mississippi has the highest percentage of Negroes of any state (more than 42%) and the lowest percentage registered (an estimated 20,000 out of 450,000 adults.) In this century, says Dr. Silver, "never as much as ten per cent and normally less than five per cent" of the Negro voting age population has registered. In some counties where more than half the residents are Negro, there are no colored registrants.

As anywhere else, part of the problem is apathy. But in Mississippi, even apathy is different. It is born not so much of disinterest as of the feeling of utter frustration and futility passed from generation to generation in the Negro community.

For example, in Holmes County, with a 3 to 1 Negro population, there are no Negro voters. Two or three have been trying to register every day since last July. According to Oscar Chase, a SNCC worker: "The registrar has flatly said, 'You can take the registration test, but I'm not going to pass anyone. I'm not going to register any niggers.' He has been true to his word." Reportedly among those who have "failed" the test is the president of a junior college, holder of a Ph.D. degree.

The test, a constitutional interpretation exam, is a handy legal weapon for disenfranchisement. "The test," says Dr. Ernst Borinski, sociologist at Tougaloo Southern Christian College near Jackson, "requires the applicant to copy and interpret a section of the Mississippi constitution. A misplaced comma or incorrectly capitalized letter can result in a man being declared illiterate. Or the applicant can simply be disqualified because of his interpretation."

Explains Chase, a Yale law graduate: "There are some 285 sections of the state constitution, and the document is one of the most complex and confusing in the nation. The examiner points to a section and tells the applicant to copy and interpret it. On the tester's cognizance, you pass or

fail. He has absolute power. His decision is not reviewable, and there are no standards by which it can be judged in court.

"In addition, a prospective registrant has to pay a poll tax of two or three dollars for two consecutive years before he can vote. This is a lot of money to sharecroppers in the Mississippi Delta, and saving and paying it calls for more foresight than many people there are accustomed to.

"Finally, an applicant can be required to state the 'duties and obligations of citizenship' before he is registered. There is no established answer. The examiner sets his own."

In 1962, the Mississippi legislature, which Dr. Silver says "spends much of its time devising legal subterfuge to keep the Negro in his place," enacted a new law, requiring the publication of names and addresses of all new registrants for two weeks in a newspaper of general circulation. Ostensibly, this allows prospective voters to be challenged on moral grounds, as is possible under state law. But obviously, it also conveniently pinpoints targets for possible intimidation.

Since 1961, white and Negro SNCC workers have labored to educate Negroes for the voting test and to get them registered. They work for subsistence salaries, usually drawing about \$9 a week, nothing at all when funds are low. They fan alone and in pairs through the backlands, sometimes sneaking onto plantations under threat of death to talk to Negro field hands, occasionally picking cotton and squash to get close to sharecroppers, often living in Negro homes for weeks or months to break through generations of fear and intimidation. The workers are constantly trying to build a new Negro self image and strength to act, relying on sustained personal contact and a willingness to help with personal problems. (They are racing with time, for it is common knowledge in Mississippi that the White Citizens' Council and other racist groups are pushing agricultural automation, which leaves Negro field hands unemployed and eventually drives them from the state. Evidently it is the segregationists' hope that by the time all Negroes are registered, they will constitute so small a percentage of the population that the supposed Negro bloc cannot seriously affect election outcomes. In recent years, some Delta counties have dropped as much as 28.5 per cent in population, the bulk of the loss being in Negroes.)

Statistically, the SNCC results are slim. In the last two years, only about 6,000 to 7,000 Negroes (out of some 70 thousand contacted) have been persuaded to attempt to register throughout the state: only a fraction of those "passed" the test and even fewer will vote when the time comes. However, 6,000 is a significantly large number, considering the tremendous reprisals a Negro can suffer even for trying to register.

Last spring in Holmes County, for example, the house of a Negro who had been urging fellow farmers to apply for registration was attacked by rifle shooting whites. To protect his family, the Negro fired back. In return, his house was set afire and burned to the ground. The next morning, the Negro himself, who had barely pulled his family out alive, was arrested for arson. He somehow managed to win the case in court, rebuilt the house and resumed his registration work. He has recently been re-arrested, this time for illegal cohabitation, despite the fact that he claims to be legally married to the woman with whom he was living. "This," says Oscar Chase, "is the kind of intimidation and harassment a Negro can expect once he is known as a person who wants to vote."

There are other examples. When the registration campaign hit Leflore County last year, county officials stopped distributing surplus food they received through the federal commodities program. This quickly brought some 20,000 Negro recipients face to face with the threat of starvation. Until the federal government ordered county officials to resume the distribution, the destitute Negroes had only the food raised in a SPICC emergency drive in Chicago. This kind of

"stomach intimidation" is expected in other Mississippi counties as registration efforts mount, as is the arbitrary firing by employers of Negro employees who try to register.

Even being seen with SNCC workers can be disastrous for Negroes in some areas. In Hattiesburg, a Negro restaurant proprietess recently gave some white Yale students a free meal. Minutes later, local police invaded the restaurant, smashed display cases and dishes, stomped on the counters and dumped food on the floor. During the confusion, someone planted a bottle of whiskey on a shelf. The proprietess was arrested for illegally possessing liquor (Mississippi is the last "dry" state). Either out of ignorance or intimidation, she hired a lawyer who allegedly is an official of the local White Citizens' Council. Predictably, he pleaded her guilty in court and she was fined \$75. (In interesting contrast to this, the white manager of a Mississippi restaurant where I was eating one evening last November (1963) brought a bottle of whiskey out of his kitchen, spiked a Coke for a customer, and set the bottle on the counter until the diner left. This occurred in plain view of four policemen, but no action was taken.)

In Itta Bena, someone hurled a smoke bomb into a registration meeting room. Fifty-eight persons walked to the town marshal's office to protest. For this, all but 13 juveniles were arrested for "breach of the peace," sentenced to six months in jail and fined \$500 each. (At about the same time, a segregationist was arrested in Alabama for illegal possession of dynamite. He was fined \$100.)

Probably the greatest weapon against vote conscious Negroes, however, is money. The vast majority of those who are employed work for whites. Many earn barely enough to live; 50 per cent of the breadwinners in the Delta gross less than \$1,000 a year and in some counties the average yearly income for workers is less than \$500. A great many are in debt to their employers through "company store" arrangements. If they tried to register, they might be fired, and many would probably be jailed for not being able to pay their debts. (These company store debts, incidentally, have made possible virtual slavery in the Delta. A Negro cotton chopper, for example, may owe a plantation owner \$40 at the end of the year. Another plantation owner might need more help for an anticipated big cotton crop. He settles the debt with the first plantation owner, often without consulting the Negro, and the worker is then "transferred" to the second farm, there he is obligated to work for the new employer.)

Understandably, reprisals have made a great many Negroes reluctant to declare themselves, logically preferring a marginal existence to no existence at all. It was partly to combat this despairing, to show the long range value of the registration campaign that the recent mock election was designed. Its structure was simple: on November 2, 3, and 4 Negroes who were old enough to vote were to drop ballots into converted milk cartons and other receptacles set up in Negro grocery stores, taverns, churches and recreation halls. Or, if fear of reprisal was too intense, ballots could be mailed in an "underground vote" to a designated headquarters. Further, those Negroes (and dissatisfied whites) registered to vote in the real election were urged to write in the names of the Freedom Vote candidates on their state ballot Aaron Henry, a Negro Clarksdale druggist running for governor, and the Reverend Edwin King, white Methodist chaplain at Tougaloo College, for lieutenant governor. Because write-ins are automatically invalid under Mississippi law, this would serve only as a protest.

Throughout the mock campaign, Henry and King discussed not only race but a variety of other issues they thought important to the state, largely in an unsuccessful attempt to start dialogue on other vital topics between the genuine candidates. Their mock candidacy brought them nearly 85,000 votes, some 35,000 more than they expected. (Perhaps significantly, the state

registrar called SNCC headquarters to find out the official Freedom Vote tally, although the figures were never acknowledged or made public by state officials.) The vote was clear indication that significant proportion of Mississippi Negroes are interested in politics and would vote if given the opportunity. And it gave the Negro community some meaningful glimpse of the power Negro voters might someday wield, if diligent registration efforts are maintained.

The mock election was undoubtedly a chilling prophecy for both sides; for the white supremacist because it showed that Negroes are not as contented as Mississippi segregationists would like outsiders to believe, and for the SNCC campaigners because it graphically illustrated the reign of terror any candidate who really seeks office on an enlightened platform will have to endure.

"The election taught us," Reverend King told me recently, "that the best in Mississippi is as bad as the worst. During the last three weeks of the campaign, every single night a citizen was violated. It was not enough that the police were not protecting us from would be killers, but they were actually joining in the harassment. Houses were invaded without warrants, and students who were working on the campaign were dragged from their beds. Polling places were threatened with bombing. Some towns, such as Yazoo City, refused to let us rally. In every town, the police followed our workers, waiting for the slightest infraction as an opportunity to arrest them. Some workers were arrested on suspicion of auto theft because they couldn't show registration papers for rented cars. In some cases, they were thrown in jail without any charge, apparently just to keep them from campaigning. Workers were beaten by both hostile whites and the police, and on more than one occasion Highway Patrolmen stopped campaign workers at the entrance of a town, pulled guns on them and said, 'You'd better leave.' There was everything short of murder and the only reason there wasn't that was poor aim."

In Jackson, the police swept into a Negro area one Saturday, when SNCC workers hoped to contact rural Negroes who came to town to shop, and rounded up a carload of campaigners. The officers drove them eight miles to the city limits, forced them from the car, and left them stranded.

In the cotton fluffed Delta region, a white girl working for SNCC was arrested for running a stop light in Greenwood and for driving with defective lights. The arrest was in broad daylight when the car's lights were turned off, and the girl has five witnesses who swear the stop light was non existent. Nevertheless, she was held on \$1,000 bond and eventually fined \$150. ("We lost thousands of dollars in fines during the campaign," Reverend King explains. "The local courts are part of the system against us, and we simply did not have enough lawyers to appeal all the cases.") Another SNCC worker was arrested for displaying improper license plates; "improper" because they were not issued in the county in which he was driving. "I know it doesn't make sense," he told me. "But it doesn't have to make sense. The idea behind a phony arrest is to get you out of circulation, and that got me in jail overnight."

On another occasion, according to Oscar Chase, a carload of Negro campaigners was stopped by Highway Patrolmen near the Jackson airport. "Do you really think niggers are equal to whites?" one trooper asked. The driver replied that he did. The patrolman suddenly grabbed the youth's hand, held the wrist over the window slot and began hitting it with the butt of his service revolver. Then he cocked the gun and put the muzzle to the driver's head. "Nigger," he said, "I could kill you now!" His finger was on the trigger when his partner leaped from the squad car and pulled him away.



There was no one to restrain the assailants in other encounters. On U.S. 61 near Natchez, a city renowned for its quiet dignity, a Chevrolet carrying several whites chased a carload of SNCC workers and repeatedly tried to crowd them over bluffs on the highway. Finally the campaigners were forced to a stop. Hurriedly they rolled up their windows and locked their doors and the pursuing whites scrambled out of the Chevy, and crowded around the car. "Get out and come with us!" one of the assailants ordered. A gun glinted in his hand. The SNCC driver suddenly jammed the accelerator to the floorboard and took off with a screech of rubber. Shots rang after the fleeing car, hitting the trunk, a fender and the right rear tire. With the tire losing air, the escaping driver forced the car to more than 100 mph, finally shook the gunmen and sped to a Negro community where the campaigners were hidden for the night. "In an incident like this," says Reverend King, "it's almost a moot point that the shots didn't hit anyone. The intent was clearly to kill."

Brushes with death are an occupational hazard to those who would change Mississippi. Aaron Henry, for example, has survived shots fired into his house in the dead of night and the bombing of his drug store. Last summer he was sentenced to the chain gang after taking Negroes to register. And recently an ex-convict voluntarily testified before the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights that he had been offered the job of sending Aaron Henry to his grave. He said that while he was serving a jail term for drunkenness in Clarksdale, a police official came to his cell and asked him to pick a fight with Henry, kill him and say the quarrel was over a woman. The convict, who has a long police record, allegedly was offered money and was promised that he would not be convicted for the murder. However, he refused to cooperate. (A person who gives such testimony is taking great risk, beyond the obvious one of physical retaliation. State officials have advised individuals summoned by the Commission to refuse to provide information. And in 1960, the state legislature passed an act changing the requirements of proof for prosecution of perjury. Now solely in cases where a defendant has testified before the Commission or any other U.S. agency on the subject of deprivation of rights the prosecution needs only the testimony of one witness to obtain a conviction for perjury. "Ordinarily," a Commission report observes, "perjury is not sustained by the uncorroborated evidence of a single witness.")

As the Henry incident suggests, the defiers of Mississippi's social code can expect no help from the police, indeed often find in the police their worst enemies. State, county and local law "enforcers" on many occasions have made clear that the protection they are sworn to give does not extend to those who embrace liberal social creeds. Oscar Chase recalls a time that he went to the Jackson Police Department to bail out a friend who had been arrested in a racial demonstration.

"Do you live over in niggertown?" the assistant police chief asked him.

"There are some Negroes there," Chase replied.

"Do you live with the niggers or with the whites?"

"Some of both."

"Well, you'd better be careful. You'll get run out of there some night."

"Well," Chase said, "if I get into trouble I'll call you."

"Don't call us," the chief said emphatically.

It was probably wise counsel. In practically every showdown where race is involved, a Jackson college professor told me, the police have displayed a "massive callousness that seems horrendous to the outsider."

Last spring in Jackson, for example, an integrated group of Tougaloo students, accompanied by a white professor, asked to be served coffee at the Woolworth store lunch counter on Capitol

Street. Told to go to the store's Negro soda fountain, they refused. The waitresses turned out the counter lights and left, but the students remained seated.

An hour passed before anything happened. But then a crowd, largely of high school students who were out of class early because of semester exams, began gathering. Before long name calling exploded into mob violence. Roughnecks in the crowd squirted catsup and mustard in the demonstrators' faces and poured fingernail polish in their hair. Some grabbed aerosol cans of paint from a hardware counter and sprayed "NIGGER" on the Tougaloo students' backs. One girl, a white student from Georgia, was beaten with a catsup bottle, and her friend was dragged into the street by her hair. A girl in the mob (the shrieking girls seemed particularly vicious) hurled a glass at the white professor and slashed his face. Then she rushed to him, pulled open the wound and ground salt and pepper into it. About the same time, a former policeman in the crowd jerked a Negro student from his stool and began kicking and stomping his head as the youth lay on the floor, offering no resistance in accordance with nonviolent tactics. Several switchblade knives were evident in the mob, and one jeering onlooker swung a noose.

All the while, Jackson policemen were standing outside watching the mayhem. At least one person, Reverend King, begged them to act, but they refused on the grounds that the store manager had not filed a complaint. Finally, so much property was being destroyed by the hysterical crowd that the manager closed the store. By then, most of the demonstrators were severely cut and bruised. Some could not see because pepper had been rubbed into their eyes, and the Negro youth on the floor was bleeding from his mouth and ears. The police arrested him and his assailant for breach of the peace. The attacker was eventually fined \$100 and sentenced to 30 days in jail. The Negro, whose role had been strictly passive, was fined \$500 and sentenced to six months. (Jackson police, incidentally, are careful to arrest no one for violating Mississippi's various segregation statutes, which would open up these laws to court review. Instead, demonstrators are charged with breach of the peace, traffic violations, parading without a permit, trespassing, refusing to obey an officer, etc. A Negro lawyer told me, "This is a sophisticated way of doing that which can't be done in a simple minded manner." The breach of the peace law, conveniently, includes a clause making illegal "any act which may lead to a breach of the peace." According to police interpretation, this means a person is guilty of breach of the peace if his presence makes someone else want to hit him. In Biloxi recently, after local officials had promised no violence would occur, police looked on for an hour while a rabid mob stoned the Back Bay Mission where an NAACP ministers' conference was in progress. With bricks, bottles, and lead pipes, the crowd broke every window in the building, slashed tires and smashed windows of cars parked outside, and threatened the Negro and white pastors inside. The police never intervened against the attackers but finally ordered the ministers to empty the church. Biloxi's mayor later praised the officers for their "handling" of the incident. He also allegedly told officials of the church, located in a white neighborhood, that "there is no longer any need for your institution in this community." The mission had angered neighbors by sponsoring typing classes for Negro girls. Similarly, the police were praised by civic organizations and city officials last summer for the way they quelled demonstrations in Jackson after NAACP leader Medgar Evers was murdered in ambush. First, they arrested some 15 ministers who were walking single file toward City Hall to protest the shooting. Then they moved against an estimated 200 persons who had started to march downtown from a Negro section. Streets were blockaded with barricades lettered: BUILDING A BETTER JACKSON. Highway Patrolmen, dressed in brown uniforms and carrying rifles, were moved in by the truck load. Storming in from the rear, they wildly began swinging clubs, sending the marchers fleeing to porches for safety. The troopers then grouped

themselves four abreast and three deep and marched through the narrow streets to rhythmic cadence calls.

From the porches, people yelled out: "Where were you when Medgar was killed?" "Why don't you protect us?" "Go get Evers' killer!" As a group of troopers reached a porch of shouting people, a captain with a bullhorn boomed: "Left face!" The troopers swung around, rifles in hand. "Ready!" the bullhorn blared. "Aim. . ." Then: "Silence on that porch!" When the porch was quiet, the troopers moved on the scene of the next outbursts. By the time "outside" newspaper and magazine reporters reached town that afternoon, all was orderly. Police harassment and intimidation have taken a kaleidoscope of forms. During the riots at Ole Miss when James Meredith was being enrolled, says Dr. Silver, Highway Patrolmen "encouraged the restless crowd to demonstrate against U.S. marshals." In Greenwood, a CBS cameraman who photographed Negroes seeking to fill out voting applications, was arrested and his film destroyed. A policeman stationed at the recently integrated Jackson public library makes a habit of following Negro patrons to the book shelves, to reading tables, even to rest rooms. When Negro Clyde Kennard tried to register at Mississippi Southern College before Meredith's headline making escapade, he was arrested for illegally possessing several bottles of whiskey, which he claimed the police planted in his car. Last Flag Day, a 15 year old Negro boy was arrested in Jackson for parading without a permit after he donned a sweatshirt lettered FREEDOM and walked down a public sidewalk carrying an American flag. On other occasions, sign-carrying demonstrators walking single file have been charged with blockading the sidewalk, despite the fact that labor union members had picketed a Jackson bakery for several weeks without the police interfering. One white man tells of being followed by a Jackson patrolman while driving his colored maid home one evening; after the maid left the car, the policeman stopped him and advised that it isn't the "Mississippi way" for a white man to let a Negro ride in the front seat with him. A white minister recalls that after he was arrested in a recent demonstration, police refused to let him take the New Testament to his cell: the Book of Acts is considered communistic by many Mississippians. In some cases, as we shall see later, police, acting without a formal complaint, have even invaded churches on Sunday morning and arrested persons they thought should not be there.

The violence and brutality that characterize Mississippi mobs too often characterize the police as well. Officers broke up one peaceful demonstration in Jackson earlier this year by beating women across the breasts with Billy clubs and by carrying off men to paddy wagons with night sticks between their legs. Some 400 persons were driven in garbage trucks to the State Fairgrounds, where they were then quartered in sexually mixed groups in hog pens surrounded by barbed wire.

At this Fairgrounds Motel (as the demonstrators called it), students were marched in 100 degree heat and ordered to do pushups until they collapsed. Then the police walked on their bodies. Twenty were locked in a 10 man paddy wagon parked in the broiling sun. When the doors were opened 30 minutes later, some of the demonstrators were unconscious. At meal time, food was placed on the floor, and police stood over the prisoners, ordering: "Eat it off the floor, dogs!" On one occasion, police and guards tore a pile of mattresses to shreds, then called in news photographers and charged that the demonstrators had rioted and destroyed the bedding.

Jackson's mayor announced that he was prepared to house 100,000 demonstrators at the Fairgrounds concentration camp "if necessary". And it was soon after this that the city purchased its "riot control car," an armored vehicle capable of shooting tear gas in 12 directions.

A few months earlier, dozens of Negroes, no doubt risking their lives by talking, had reported endless stories of police sadism to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. Typical was the case of a Negro whose car was stopped by a Mississippi Highway Patrolman after being trailed for three miles. When the driver asked why he was halted, the trooper whipped out a blackjack and began clouting him. When the man raised his arms to fend off the blows, the patrolman drew his revolver and threatened: "I'll kill you if you don't get them arms down, nigger!"

Taken to the police station, the man was blackjacked again in the presence of eight other officers, who ignored his pleas for help. Finally one policeman took a brown leather strap five inches wide and three feet long from a drawer. "Drop your pants, nigger!" he commanded. The half naked Negro was then handcuffed to the legs of a chair and bent over its back. "If you holler," he was told, "we'll kill you!" Five policemen took turns beating him, then poured raw whiskey over his torn flesh. Nearly 29 hours later, never having been charged and consistently denied the right to use a telephone, the man was released from jail.

Those who are charged and are sentenced to Mississippi's medieval prison system enter another nightmarish world. At Parchman State Prison, some young girls who had been involved in racial demonstrations were housed on Death Row next to the gas chamber; their cells were so crowded that some had to sleep in the showers. White demonstrators have been celled with rabid segregationists who beat them constantly. Others have suffered in Parchman's "hot box." "This is a windowless isolation cell with temperature control," SNCC worker Jerry Bray told me recently. "The guards pack six or seven prisoners into it, then turn on the heat. The guys start sweating, suffocating. They take off their clothes. The guards take the clothes away, then turn on big fans that make the cell cold. By switching the temperature back and forth, they can make everybody sick."

And illness in a Mississippi prison is a terrifying thing for anyone involved in racial matters. For example, Clyde Kennard, the first Negro to try to crack Mississippi's segregated schools, was behind bars when he learned he had cancer. He was operated on at a university hospital, and doctors told him he had one chance in five of living for five years if he was brought back in 30 days for additional treatment. A month passed, but Kennard remained at the prison. Authorities there refused to let his lawyer see him. The attorney, Jesse Brown, asked to receive Kennard's medical reports; he never got them. Prison officials continued to work the Negro in the fields despite his growing weakness. Six months later, they finally took him back to the university hospital. It was too late. Shortly after he was paroled, he died at Billings Hospital in Chicago. "What was the reason?" Jesse Brown asks. "Was it an administrative oversight? Or was it deliberate negligence because of his connection with school integration? No one can say for sure. You have to draw your own conclusions."

There is no doubt of deliberate abuse in other cases, however. At Greenville, I talked to Jesse Harris, 21, a native Negro Mississippian who served time at the Hind's County Work Farm last year for contempt of court after sitting in the white section of a Jackson courtroom. After his arrest, Harris was held incommunicado for two days and refused permission to contact a lawyer. During his trial, he requested a continuance so that he could get an attorney. This was denied. He was sentenced to 30 days and fined \$100, to be worked out at \$3 a day.

"Right after the trial, I was taken to an elevator by three deputies," Harris told me. "They told me to put my hands against the elevator wall and to spread my legs. They started to beat me with their fists on the back and face. I fell down. They kicked me in the neck and back and

stomped on my head. Some teeth broke off and my nose felt like it was broken. I was hurt bad. But they wouldn't let me see a doctor."

At the Work Farm, Harris was dressed in stripes because he was an "agitator" and told that if he spoke to anyone, the entire prison population would be punished. On two occasions, he was beaten.

"The first time, they said I wasn't working fast enough," he recalls. "The guards got four other prisoners to hold me down, then took down my pants and whipped me 16 times with a rubber hose. That doesn't leave a mark, but it can tear you apart inside.

"The second time, I wasn't able to move a 300 pound fallen tree on a work gang. They beat me 12 times with a stick the size of a baseball bat. Then they threw me into solitary for 36 hours. The cell was a sweat box no windows, no lights, no toilet. I had bread and water twice a day, and the temperature felt like 140."

(Such savagery is not reserved for racial "agitators." One of Governor Barnett's achievements is the re-introduction of the lash into the prisons, which Mississippi newspapers reported straight faced as a move to increase prison agriculture production. One night while Harris was at the Farm, a prisoner discovered his T shirt had been stolen. Sixteen men on the cellblock were roused and asked to name the thief. No one did. The guards produced "Black Annie," a four foot studded belt five inches wide, and ordered the men to strip. Each was flogged on his bare back 15 times.)

"Even when you can pin down police and prison brutality," a college professor explains, "there's little you can do about it. If charged, the accused will be tried in a Mississippi court before a Mississippi jury with a Mississippi judge. He'll be acquitted."

The courts and their officers, in fact, are as much a part of the perverted system of denying Constitutional rights to half the state's citizens as the police and the prisons. In most racial cases, what happens in Mississippi courtrooms is an obscene burlesque of the legal process. From the days of the Scottsboro Boys on, the plight of the Negro in Southern courts has been a well known scandal. Today for pro integrationists, white and black, there is even less hope of justice.

A common inequity in Mississippi courts concerns the setting of bond; where race is an issue, it is consistently exorbitant. Recently, for example, two Negro students and a white friend were arrested in Jackson when they tried to attend a segregated symphony concert for which they had purchased tickets. Charged with disorderly conduct in a public place, their bond was set at \$500. That same evening, a white citizen was picked up for public drunkenness and disorderly conduct. His bond was \$15.

When cases come to trial, an attorney representing Negroes or white "agitators" can rarely expect procedural fairness from the judge. Many jurists make their positions clear at the outset. When Freedom Riders were brought to trial in Jackson in 1961, the judge (reportedly a member of the White Citizens' Council) opened court by apologizing to the all white jury "for taking your time" and assuring the jurors he would do everything he could to get the trial over with swiftly. He permitted the prosecutor to take great pains in categorizing the defendants, presumably for the jury's benefit. The prosecutor carefully pointed out that one student was a Catholic and repeatedly reviewed the fact that he was from California, i.e. an "outsider." Another defendant was asked if she were a member of the "Jewish race" which, of course, was pertinent to the case only so far as it aroused the jury's prejudices. During a recess in the trial, a police captain, the state's star witness, was permitted to talk freely with jurors, explaining his views on the "freedom

movement" and showing them pictures of arrested riders. With only five minutes' deliberation, the jury brought in a verdict of guilty.

In many cases, Negroes and white "agitators" face such situations without a lawyer. When Byron de la Beckwith was charged with firing the sniper's bullet that killed Medgar Evers, attorneys from all over the state volunteered their services in his behalf. Yet there are perhaps only one or two white lawyers in the entire state who would defend anyone involved in a civil rights arrest. "A white man who would do that," one attorney told me, "would be a traitor to the cause."

Among the last who would was William Higgs, a graduate of Ole Miss who began seeing the injustice of segregation while attending Harvard Law School. After returning to Jackson, Higgs began aiding Negro lawyers in drawing up briefs and planning strategy for integrationist defendants. But it was strictly a secret association; he was reluctant even to speak to Negro lawyers in the halls of the courthouse. "He knew if he came out in the open, he'd immediately lose a lot of business from white clients," a Negro attorney told me. "A white lawyer has to think a long time before he goes into a Mississippi court with a civil rights case."

Higgs finally did, however. He filed suit against the state to prohibit tax money from being paid to the White Citizens' Council for propaganda purposes through the Mississippi Sovereignty Commission. Later, he took the case of *Dewey Green vs. the University of Mississippi*, in which a Negro youth sought admission to the school.

The Green suit was scarcely filed before a young man who was living with Higgs was involved in an auto crash while driving the attorney's car. During interrogation by the police, the driver allegedly confessed that he and Higgs had indulged in unnatural sex acts. Higgs was charged with contributing to the delinquency of a minor. A friend says:

"He was afraid that if he were arrested and jailed, the charge would be changed to sodomy. Police often change charges here after a suspect is in custody, and sodomy is a popular accusation to use against 'agitators' in Mississippi. Even your friends won't speak to you after that. Sodomy is not a bondable offense and conviction carries a 10 year prison sentence.

"Also about this time, news was leaking out about Clyde Kennard's mistreatment in prison. And Higgs, along with a lot of other people, believed that Kennard had been framed in the first place. Bill finally fled the state rather than face trial."

He was tried and convicted in absentia. He has never been brought back to Mississippi, but has been barred from further practice of law there. Most of his friends believe he was framed. Some claim the youth who accused him has recently signed a statement saying the "confession" was false.

Regardless, any white lawyers who now appear in Mississippi civil rights cases are most likely imported from the outside. They earn their livings in Chicago, New York and other cities, and come South only on special assignment.

Getting a Negro lawyer in Mississippi is not easy, either. There are only four (4) practicing full time in the entire state, and they, too, are frequently subjected to harassment in civil rights cases.

Jesse Brown, for example, nearly lost his license last year after taking a school desegregation suit in Lake County. While the case was in progress, unidentified gunmen fired shots through the window of a cafe operated by one of Brown's clients and into the homes of several other Negroes. The next day, the cafe owner claimed she had never hired Brown to represent her. He was cited for contempt of court, which jeopardized his right to practice.

Eventually he was cleared when he produced a written retainer from the woman. But the judge still assessed him for the court costs of his hearing.

Despite such experiences, Brown continues to travel throughout the state defending Negroes and sympathetic whites in civil rights cases even in dusty backcountry courtrooms where spittoons line the jury box and the all white jurors wear faded overalls. He undoubtedly risked his life by being the only Mississippi attorney of record for James Meredith; he came within a few hours of being lynched along with client Mack Charles Parker, accused of raping a white woman; he recently had to sneak out of town on back roads after defending Cleve McDowell, the Negro arrested for carrying a gun at Ole Miss after his life was threatened. He undoubtedly is the kind of fighter NAACP leader Charles Evers had in mind when he recently told a Connecticut audience that "Mississippi is the home of the free and the brave; the whites are free and the Negroes are brave."

Unfortunately, however, Evers' statement is only half true. The strange paradox of Mississippi is that the whites are not free. They have, in the words of Reverend King, "built a prison around themselves," and they are as much captive of the Mississippi system as the Negroes. Simply stated, there exists what one Mississippian calls "a fog of fear" that prevents most whites from voicing anything but rabid segregationist views. I heard one Negro student say half joking to a white classmate at Tougaloo: "After we get free, we're going to free you."

"Within their own community," says Dr. Borinski, "Negroes are able to move with comparative freedom and say what they like. This is not so true of the whites." Dr. Silver adds: "The white man's ideas must be harmonious with the orthodoxy. Nonconformity is forbidden. The white man does not dare express a deviating opinion without looking over his shoulder." These days, a man explained to me, "you don't express your views in any social situation unless you are absolutely sure that your listeners are in utter agreement with you." Further, the typical Mississippi white does not dare give any indication that he might even privately hold an opinion that differs from the majority creed. Jesse Brown, for instance, tells of the time a white judge invited him to his home to discuss legal matters. "I smoked his cigars, I met his family and we had a nice evening in his den," the Negro attorney recalls. "But when it was time to go, he opened the front door first and checked to be certain the street was clear. When he saw that none of the neighbors was watching, he said I could leave."

In the white community, dialogue on the race issue is not tolerated, only monologue. After the Ole Miss bloodshed last year, the president of a life insurance company appeared on a TV station he owns in Jackson and editorialized quite mildly to the effect that mob violence perhaps was not the way to solve Mississippi's problems. The next day, the board of directors of the insurance company flatly informed him that he was to make no further statements on the subject if he wished to remain president.

Reprisal against whites who speak out takes a variety of forms: shots were fired from a roving car into the home of a college professor; children of Negro sympathizers have been spat upon, beaten, jeered and ostracized at school; a doctor refused to treat one little girl's infected leg because her father, a Baptist missionary, worked with Negroes; the auto insurance of white demonstrators was suddenly cancelled "for confidential reasons," and no other companies would write him coverage; a Molotov cocktail was hurled into the home of a man who protested police brutality; two Methodist missionaries (native Mississippians) who began a speaking tour of the state to explain how racial turmoil is harming Christian mission work in Malaya suddenly found their appearances cancelled.

On one occasion, an Episcopal rector who had permitted his church to be used by an unpublicized interracial group interested in bridging the white Negro gap was telephoned by a man who identified himself as a New York Times reporter. In answer to questions, the rector explained in detail the purpose of the group, but asked that much of what he said be off the record because of anticipated opposition by segregationists. Only later did he discover that the interviewer was not a reporter, but was himself a white supremacist who tape recorded the conversation and then used it in an effort to get the rector ousted.

The most powerful way of cutting off dissenters, however, is through economic pressure. For example, many Mississippi bank officials are believed to be members of the White Citizens' Council. "If you get out of line by expressing liberal racial views," a Mississippian told me, "you may be unable to get loans, or a note might suddenly come due, or your mortgage might be foreclosed. If you run a store and word spreads about your attitude, your business might be boycotted.

"In a wealthy state, economic pressure is serious enough. But in a dreg state like Mississippi the poorest in the nation hitting a man in the pocketbook can be fatal."

One who was hit there was a Jackson contractor, whose wife served on a federal advisory committee that investigated police brutality and other civil rights abuses of the segregated system. Typical of the committee's statements was: "In all important areas of citizenship, the Negro in Mississippi receives substantially less than his due consideration as an American and as a Mississippian. The denial extends from the time he is denied the right to be born in a desegregated hospital, through his segregated and inferior school years and productive years when jobs for which he can qualify are refused him, to the day he dies and is laid to rest in a cemetery for Negroes only." Recently the contractor's wife told me:

"People couldn't stand this criticism of the system coming from Mississippi citizens. All the committee members were harassed. In our home, the phone rang at all hours of the day and night people making obscene remarks, threats, or just breathing into the receiver. All my relatives and friends were called, too. At school my kids were pestered and my son was kicked off his bowling team. Then rumors spread that I was a Communist. Anyone who wants to change things in Mississippi is automatically a Communist, you know.

"Finally, my husband's business was affected. He was no longer invited to bid on city contracts and he lost out on other jobs. Inspectors on jobs already underway became extremely picayunish, causing delays and big losses. We held out as long as we could, but eventually things reached the point where I had to resign from the committee or move out of the state. I resigned. So far no one has been found to replace me.

"There is a sizeable minority of whites in Mississippi who feel things are wrong and would like to help change them. But experiences like mine keep them from becoming involved."

The White Citizens' Council denies that it is directly involved in the violence and harassment that today scar Mississippi. The organization prides itself on its veneer of refined and respectable opposition to the forces of integration. But at the very least, the council has helped create a climate in which intimidation and brutality are both spawned and condoned.

The Council, which urges its members to "work . . . hope . . . pray for White Monday" (in contrast to Black Monday, when the Supreme Court school desegregation decision was issued), produces an endless stream of inflammatory propaganda. Says Dr. Borinski: "Everything it puts out, speeches, radio and TV programs, movies, newspaper articles, brochures is a veiled invitation to violence."



Consider the inevitable reaction of the bigoted Southerner who is incessantly hammered with these "truths" from the Council: "If the Negro was permitted to obtain the ballot... it would mean that no qualified white man ...could ever hold public office (and) seats now held by competent white representatives would be held by ignorant, incompetent Negroes"; "the obscenity, vulgarity, immorality and brutality which came about (where schools were desegregated in other states) requires the constant maintenance of policemen in the halls . . . obscene pictures and notes were placed on the desks of white girls by Negroes . . . the carrying of concealed weapons, the vicious aggravated assaults, the actual rape and attempted rape of white girls and even teachers are the results. . . ."; "There is a vast gulf of difference between the IQ of the Negro . . . and the average white man because of an inherent deficiency in mental ability, psychological and temperamental inadequacies, of indifference and natural indolence on the part of the Negro . . . the white man (in an integrated situation) would be dragged down to the Negroes' level"; "If segregation breaks down, the social structure breaks down. . . . The Communists hope to achieve disintegration through integration in America"; "Integration represents darkness, regimentation, totalitarianism, Communism and destruction. . . . Segregation represents the freedom to choose one's associates, Americanism, state sovereignty and the survival of the white race"; "The enemy, cloaked in the mysterious name of 'integration' is hysterically assaulting the natural order, the created order in nature, the legal order under God, and above all else, the free grace of our Lord Jesus Christ"; "The fate of the white man (and woman) in the Congo and other new African nations is a stern warning"; "Where integration occurs, violence becomes inevitable"; "Integration will bring the evils of miscegenation (which) will be seriously detrimental to both races and to our civilization." A newspaper editor told me: "This (racial interbreeding as a result of desegregation) is the point the Council hits hardest. If there's anything that'll send a redneck running for his rifle, it's the thought of a big, black nigger in his wife's bedroom."

Some Council literature is also liberally laced with racist jokes and quips. One speech on sale in Council offices in Jackson tells of Lena Horne, the Negro vocalist, going to the mirror and saying:

"Mirror, mirror on the wall,  
Who's the fairest of them all?"

To which the mirror replies:

"Snow White, Nigger,  
And don't you forget it!"

A few paragraphs later, the same speech mocks the Kennedy's with the phrase, "Ignore that nigga, with vigga!" And another paragraph reads: "I'm no snob. I think the Kennedy's are all right. But I sure wouldn't want my daughter to marry one." The Council, despite its professed abhorrence of violence, does not disown those who are accused of living by the gun. When Byron de la Beckwith's fingerprints were found on the high powered rifle that killed Medgar Evers, the Council launched a state wide campaign for funds for his defense. Without the help of the Council's Legal Defense Fund, he would have been virtually penniless. Interestingly, before the slaying Beckwith had been a tobacco salesman in the Delta, and in spare moments he gave street corner orations in behalf of Black Monday, a book length attack by a Mississippi Supreme Court justice on the federal school desegregation decision. The book is strongly publicized in Citizens' Council literature. The grim irony of the Council is that much of its propaganda is financed by

Mississippi tax money, including that paid by Negroes and moderate whites. Through the state Sovereignty Commission, the Council is given as much as \$5,000 a month to pay for radio and TV programs. In addition, the Commission itself sponsors a speakers bureau which sends lecturers all over the nation to tell the "white side" of Mississippi's integration battles. The Commission is very conscious of public relations material that might be used in these presentations. The Reverend Gilbert Haughton, a Negro minister, recently recalled the day when several colored pastors called on Jackson's mayor in stern protest of the city's segregation policies. The mayor immediately offered one of the Negroes his chair. The man no sooner was seated than a photographer from the Sovereignty commission snapped his picture. This was then displayed to outsiders as evidence of how good race relations are in Jackson, Reverend Haughton explains. "Why, a Negro was even sitting in the mayor's chair!"

Less publicized to outsiders is that Sovereignty Commission agents allegedly appear at integrated meetings, taking photographs and copying the license numbers of those attending. Some Negro agents supposedly are employed to infiltrate Negro groups and attend Negro church services to learn of any integration plans. And the Commission also allegedly maintains files of persons reported by their neighbors and other sources as being "soft" on integration.

In a healthy and dynamic society, there would be institutions the press, the church, the schools and other agencies which would speak out against the fateful developments that are sweeping Mississippi toward an inevitable rendezvous with tragedy. In the "Magnolia jungle," however, these institutions, with rare exception, have actually helped foster the prevailing climate. Indeed, to fully understand the fanatical Mississippi mentality, one must comprehend the roles of these influential groups, for as Dr. Silver has pointed out, they are "in the service of the closed society."

Let's start with the press. It is not, as many Northerners assume, devoid of racial news. On the contrary, there often are only a handful of stories in an edition of a newspaper which are not in some way connected with Negroes, integration and civil rights frequently to the exclusion of other important national and international reports. This is not to say, however, that race stories are thoroughly or fairly covered. Indeed, at times the Mississippi press come close to resembling the hate sheets distributed by extremist groups. Because Mississippians like the residents of other states confine the bulk of their reading to their daily papers, a few examples of reporting by the two Jackson dailies (the largest in the state) will illustrate the kind of information that is constantly feeding the public mind.

A simple but telling incident occurred when Beckwith was arrested for the Evers' slaying. In a large headline, the Jackson Daily News identified him as a Californian, i.e. an "outsider." Buried deep in the story was the fact that Beckwith had been born in California of Mississippi parents and had moved back to Mississippi when he was about two years old, and stayed there ever since. However, as any newspaper survey will reveal, more people read headlines than read stories, so many readers no doubt got the impression that this violence was caused by an outsider particularly since the papers have consistently blamed outsiders for Mississippi's racial troubles (The papers, incidentally, have encouraged contributions to Beckwith's defense fund. While I was in Jackson, one paper ran a lengthy letter from the accused killer, appealing for financial help.)

Last November (1963), under the headline "White Mixer Weds Arkansas Negro Woman," the News told of an integrationist from Ohio who married a Negro he met while working for SNCC in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. Much of the story was devoted to quotes from the Arkansas attorney general, such as: "It is a direct, deliberate insult and disservice to the white and colored

people of our state. . . . The girl was thrown out of college and the man is a disinherited son of a Cincinnati family. . . . Neither of these people works for a living, but are paid by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, which is a trouble making organization. . . . This marriage was not conceived in any light except that designed to ferment hatred." There were no contradictory quotes from the couple or their friends. Not only does a story like this reinforce the Mississippi fear that integration will instantly bring intermarriage, but it conveys other favorite themes: that SNCC employees do not "work" for a living, that the group's voter registration attempts are "trouble making," that only outcasts would intermarry, and that an intermarriage is not possibly an outgrowth of genuine love but is conceived to "ferment hatred."

Another race story recently headlined concerned a series of interviews on intermarriage conducted by US News and World Report. In the magazine, seven prominent persons, including Swedish social economist Gunnar Myrdal and anthropologist Margaret Mead, gave their views on the facets of intermarriage. Six of the experts agreed that marriage between Negroes and whites would not be harmful to either race and that Negroes were considerably less interested in intermarriage than in attaining basic civil rights. Strongly dissenting opinions were given by the seventh interviewee, a psychology professor at the University of Virginia, who declared that "race mixing" would be "catastrophic." Only two of the seven authorities were quoted in the Jackson paper: the Southerner and a New York university professor who was quoted out of context to the effect that the "motive for intermarriage is often neurotic."

Such one sided treatment is not unusual. When Dr. Silver made his recent speech, reports in the New York Times covered nearly a full page. However, the Jackson Clarion-Ledger, according to a Mississippi newspaper man had three or four inches of quotations from Silver, then devoted the bulk of its story to a critique of the speech by an Ole Miss student.

Coverage of the Freedom Rides and other demonstrations has been significant, too. Jackson papers have described the demonstrators (who included divinity students) as "scummy looking creatures, prostitutes, dope addicts, auto thieves and registered homosexuals hot off the slut alleys of California." Yet no mention has been made of the numerous instances of police brutality. Indeed, police have been praised for their "efficient handling" of the situation, and the White Citizens' Council has been credited with restraining "the more emotional whites." (The Jackson Daily News said: "A strong Citizens' Council in each community that is comprised of the community's most able leadership would be an effective means of avoiding violence and bloodshed as more funny folks, plate passers and outside agitators swarm into the South.")

Also an important ingredient of the race conflict are Jackson's local columnists, Tom Ethridge of the Clarion Ledger and Jimmy Ward of the Daily News. Both openly indulge in race libel and hate mongering. For example, when Dr. Ralph Bunche spoke at Tougaloo college last October, Ethridge referred to him as "Bier Bunche" and said he should be "undergoing trial as a war criminal instead of making demagogic speeches and laying the groundwork for colored supremacy through world government." On another occasion, displaying his disrespect for the Kennedy family, Ethridge posed the late President in a hypothetical situation in which he "kicked his family out of the White House and shackled up with Madame Nhu."

Ward, on the other hand, has indulged in kind of a Bilbo humor. For instance, "Did you hear about the new Tougaloo doll? It looks black and white until you shine light on it, and then the thing turns pink." And: "As summer school opens at Tougaloo College, affectionately known as Cancer College, a new course is being installed. It's a class in Rapid Hate." And: "Mrs. R. S. McCorkle of Vaiden. says her definition of NAACP goes like this: 'National Association for the Advancement of the Communist Party.'" One day last June, Ward commented: "When Dr. Martin

Luther King hits a town, he leaves in his wake bricks, glass and burned out buildings as well as bloodshed and a great amount of hatred. While this may provide Dr. King with a high plane of living for himself, he has yet to clean up a single slum or make life easier for a single Negro." Five days later, Ward relayed this "joke" contributed by a woman reader: "Three young men sat talking on the stile that led from the church yard into the cemetery. L.C. said, 'Boys, I'll tell you what. When us gets desegregated, I'm going to dress in my Sunday best and go up town to that big First Methodist Church, and I'm going to march down to the first bench and set, and I'm gonna sing louder than all them white brethren.' 'Yeah,' Gabe agreed. 'I'm gonna put on my glad rags and some perfume, and I'm gonna walk right in that swell Country Club out on Ash Cat (Ascot) Avenue. I'm gonna tap the swellest blonde and I'm gonna tell her, "Miz, Madam, dis here next dance is mine.'" John Lee said calmly, 'Well after you all does that, I'm gonna get out my good blue serge suit and buy me a white carnation for my button hole and I'll mosey down to the I Hope to Rise Funeral Parlor and set up with two deceased pals.'"

An impartial psychologist might well be asked if this kind of commentary does not implant the suggestion of unlawful reprisals against Negroes in the minds of Southern white readers, just as surely as does Dr. King's "agitation."

"You have this kind of 'news' drumming at you day after day," says a Mississippi college professor, "and even if you don't want to believe it, it begins to raise doubts. You can't blame people here for being misinformed and feeling as they do. If you come away with any feeling at all after reading the papers, it is a feeling of fear because the Negroes are coming or of superiority because the Negroes are being put down."

A few years ago, a Jackson industrialist, Dumas Miller, purchased an evening paper, the State Times, to compete with the Clarion Ledger and Daily News, both of which are owned by the influential Hederman brothers. Walter Smith, who operates a string of weekly newspapers, recalls: "Miller's paper didn't take liberal views; nothing is liberal here. But it at least tried to give the other side on the race issue, tried to get people ready to start thinking about these things. As soon as the State Times started to make a profit, the Hederman papers announce combined advertising rate. It was set up so that by advertising in the morning paper, you get an ad in the evening paper virtually free. This put Miller's evening paper out of business, and the only moderate voice was stilled."

In other parts of the state, the same monolithic pattern exists, by and large. Daily papers are published in fewer than 20 other Mississippi cities, and only 12 per cent of the state's residents reads a daily, the lowest percentage in the nation. Many of the rest read weeklies, which, in many cases, means they have no access to wire service stories to give them even a glimpse of the outside world. Charges newspaperman Smith, whose papers have urged sanity and reason in the racial crisis: "Only about six papers in all Mississippi have ever gone against the Citizens' Council line. In the offices of many weeklies, the editor's desk is merely a junction between press releases and the linotype operator. The editors will slap ahead on virtually everything that comes across. And the Citizens' Council is flooding them with reams of information all the time." (Furthermore, Smith points out, one of the Hederman brothers is president of the Mississippi Press Association, and small town papers largely "take their line" from the capitol press.)

Mississippi radio and television reporting has proved equally irresponsible. In the past, some stations have prefaced special network reports on the race issue with the announcement: "The following program is Northern managed news." And during on the spot network reports of outbreaks of Negro white violence, some TV stations frequently develop "transmission trouble" which blacks out the film. When pictures of the vicious Woolworth riot in Jackson were

broadcast from New York, one Jackson TV station suddenly announced "cable difficulty." Reverend Edwin King telephoned and asked a station employee if this were a deliberate blackout. "Yes, it is," the man allegedly replied. When Reverend King said he intended to notify the FCC immediately, the employee said the trouble was not deliberate. However, the picture resumed almost instantly.

On another occasion, 17 Negro ministers meeting with Jackson's Mayor Thompson to request a bi-racial discussion committee disgustingly walked out of his office when the mayor refused. The mayor then recorded statements from two Negroes (both described by members of the Negro community as "Uncle Toms") who had sat in on the session. The statements, claiming that local Negroes "like things as they are" and that "outside agitators are just trying to stir up trouble," then were played over local radio as a report on the meeting.

Perhaps the most striking incident of TV distortion occurred last summer when residents of Jackson's Negro community came out on their porches one evening and began singing freedom songs. Police swarmed into the area, shouting on bullhorns for them to keep quiet. On one porch, officers spotted John Salter, a white political science professor from Tougaloo who has been active in civil rights, and charged toward him. The police beat him, laying his face open, then took him away. The entire sequence was captured by a local television photographer. On the evening news show, however, the part of the film showing police charging the porch was shown, then the cameras cut to a newscaster, who reported: "At this point, Dr. Salter became excited and fell off the porch." Then the film resumed, showing the police standing over Salter, whose head was streaming blood. No mention was made of the beating and, obviously, the film sequence of it never made the screen.

What about printed reports coming in from the outside, such as in newsmagazines and books? Aren't these capable of alerting Mississippians to the deficiencies of their own news media? "No, they're not," says Walter Smith. "The local press, by constantly claiming Northerners distort the situation, have conditioned people not to read or not to believe what comes in from the outside. A local magazine distributor told me recently that almost all the copies of Time, Newsweek and the Saturday Evening Post he puts on the newsstands every week come back. People have been conditioned to believe these are all "against" the South. Yet when Look ran an account of the Ole Miss riots, hundreds of people here bought copies. It was an amazingly factual report, but nobody believed it. The local papers had claimed that the whole trouble was caused by the Federal government, and the Junior Chamber of Commerce had distributed reprints of the newspaper articles. That was what the people believed, even when they had contradictory facts. This kind of brainwashing is really more frightening than outright censorship."

It should also be noted that on the whole the local press is lax in exposing any government corruption in Mississippi, as the press in some other areas thrive on doing. It may be that Mississippi has no corruption. But more likely possibilities no doubt lie elsewhere, such as in the fact that the Hederman printing company holds the state's printing contracts and that the powerful Hederman brothers and other editors have historically supported the one party system. The editor of a Negro weekly told me: "No part of the officialdom is being watched by the press. In the whole spectrum—from the United Givers Fund to the governor's office—no watchdog reporters are looking over politicians' shoulders and telling the public what is really going on."

The press service to the closed society may not always be entirely voluntary. Walter Smith points out that considerable pressure has been put on his advertisers by the White Citizens' Council because of his paper's moderate stands, and such pressure could cause some papers to collapse financially. They are forced to "go along" to survive.

Similarly, pressure on teachers and schools, who might be expected to stimulate constructive thought, undoubtedly is partly responsible for the lack of dialogue on race offered by the state's educational institutions. To be hired, teachers must sign oaths that they are not members of or contributors to the NAACP and other integrationist organizations. To stay hired, in most cases, they must avoid expressing or being connected with any moderate or liberal views. One Mississippi teacher, whose son was planning to participate in racial demonstrations in another state, was advised to keep him away from such activities if she wished to retain her job. At Ole Miss, youthful spies have sat in classes, reporting "subversive" remarks by professors to the White Citizens' Council; several professors have been pressured out of the university since Meredith's admission. For exercising supposed academic freedom, others have been arrested. For example, Ray Kerciu, an Ole Miss art teacher, painted several canvases of the Meredith crisis. One showed the Confederate flag with the word WHITE painted across it, and another bore the word NEVER (the Citizens' Council's slogan). Another painting was covered with curses, slogans and epithets Kerciu heard during the riot. For expressing himself, he was arrested for exhibiting obscene and indecent paintings and for desecrating the Confederate flag. The charges, which could have brought him seven months in jail and a \$600 fine, were eventually dropped but not before the controversial paintings were removed from exhibition.

Students are not so closely shielded from segregationist views, however. White Citizens' Council speakers are invited to school assemblies. The Council's newsletter goes to all school libraries, and there is wide student participation in the Council's annual essay contest. (This last is particularly insidious, Reverend King believes. "A student, writing on a topic such as 'Mississippi's Way of Life,' can use various research sources suggested by the Council and think he is doing independent research," the minister explains. "Actually, he is teaching himself prejudice.")

Negro teachers are especially reluctant to speak out on race issues though the inequities of Mississippi's segregated school system must be painfully evident to them, considering that four times as much state money is spent on every white student as on every Negro. "They can't afford to speak out," Walter Smith explains. "They are likely to be among the few persons in the Negro community getting a half way decent salary. They are getting it from the state, and the state can ease them out one way or another if it wants to."

Even schools and teachers who receive no state funds are made to feel the pressure to conform. A few years ago, Dr. Borinski, head of the social sciences division at Tougaloo, spoke on race relations at Millsaps College, a private Methodist school in Jackson. After the talk, members of the Citizens' Council demanded that Millsaps' president issue a statement explaining where the college and its faculty "stood" on the race question. When the president refused, the Mississippi Association of Methodist Ministers and Laymen (a group dedicated to curbing the "teaching of integration, socialism, and communism in the Methodist church literature" and described by some observers as the "Citizens' Council's wing inside the church") began a campaign, urging Methodist churches to stop donating funds to the college. Some did, and Millsaps has taken no strong stands on the race issue.

One college in the state is Tougaloo. Its academic freedom has not suffered because it is supported by out-of-state money. However, some state officials now are reportedly trying to get it chartered as a Mississippi college, which would, of course, give segregationist elements absolute control. For the time being, though, Tougaloo students and faculty are at the forefront of

integration movements in Jackson, particularly the school's 27 year old white chaplain, Reverend Edwin King.

Reverend King's experiences in the last few months graphically document the fact that another social institution, the church, is largely an instrument of the Mississippi system. What has happened to him well illustrates a point stressed by Dr. Silver: "Organized religion can take little pride in its role in the (race) controversy. In the past years, many preachers and a few ministerial groups have made courageous stands, but the church as a whole has placed its banner with the status quo."

The young minister, a native of Vicksburg, became active in the civil rights movement while a seminarian in the East. In 1960, he was arrested in Montgomery, Alabama, for eating lunch in a racially mixed group and was sentenced to the county work farm. During his confinement, he was forced to sleep on a bare cell floor, was beaten by segregationist cell mates while guards looked on, and was photographed in prison stripes. (The picture was distributed to Mississippi newspapers, with the announcement that he was engaged to a Mississippi girl.)

"After he was ordained in 1962," recalls his wife, Jeanette, "Methodist ministers from the Mississippi conference pressured him not to return to Mississippi and offered him a lot of help if he'd agree to join another jurisdiction. He felt Mississippi simply had to change or suffer a holocaust, and he wanted to help change things through the church, so he persisted."

For awhile, he was allowed into the conference on a trial basis, but when he pushed a vote by the Methodist Ministers of Mississippi which would give him the right to vote on conference business, he was expelled, on grounds that he was "not fit" to be a Christian minister. Because this procedure is usually taken when a minister is adulterous, habitually drunk or otherwise immoral, the reasons for the expulsion traditionally are not made public. Thus Reverend King has been unable to appeal the decision because he lacks a statement of the specific charges against him from which to prepare a defense. Regardless, he has since become chaplain at Tougaloo and among other activities has tried to take integrated groups of students and out of town ministers to white protestant churches in Jackson. "I know a little integration in the church isn't going to change a society as sick as Mississippi's" Reverend King told me recently. "But people here respect religion very highly. I figured that if any Negro right would be accepted, it would be the right to worship anywhere. And once integrated contact in the church is established, I have enough faith in the church as a powerful social institution to think the potential for other advancements is tremendous."

Except in isolated instances, however, the contact has never been established. Since last fall, more than a score of visiting ministers and students have been turned away by the ushers of Jackson churches and an equal number have been arrested and jailed for trying to enter Protestant churches in integrated groups. Following the pattern of other integrated arrests, they have been subjected to police harassment, held on exorbitant bond and charged not with violating segregation statutes but with such offenses as trespassing, breach of the peace and blockading the sidewalk. The first group arrested, three girls who tried to attend church on World Communion Sunday, were held in jail incommunicado from 11 a.m. Sunday to 3 p.m. Monday and finally were given one telephone call among them just one hour before going on trial. (Charged with disturbing divine worship, they were fined \$1,000 and sentenced to six months in jail.)

Since the integration efforts began, a whirlwind of fantastic developments has swept through Jackson's churches. The White Citizens' Council, which publicly announced it would "save the churches from integration," has been busy transferring its members from church to church,

encouraging some to change their church membership so that racists will be well represented in each congregation. One Presbyterian minister announced that members of his flock might not be the persons who were turning Negroes away at the church; he said roving representatives of the Citizens Council and the Sovereignty Commission had been spotted outside the church on Sunday morning, and he suspected them of the action. Some pastors have said banks would refuse their church credit if they cooperated with integration attempts. Other ministers have made no excuses, however. At the Wesley Methodist church, sanctuary doors were locked and worshippers admitted only after an usher had peered out through a peephole and ascertained their acceptability, in the style of Prohibition era speakeasies. At Capitol Street Methodist church, where I observed an integration attempt recently, a phalanx of ushers swept down the steps and formed a human wall across the entrance the moment they spotted an integrated group of ministers approaching. A few Sundays earlier, a young member of this congregation had come down the steps and stood with the demonstrators in a display of sympathy; his parents were warned by an anonymous phone caller that their home would be bombed "one of these nights" because of the boy's action. At another church, a band of old ladies, clutching Bibles, stood in a semi circle around the would be visitors, chanting: "Nigger lovers, nigger lovers," . . . while the church bells rang. A resolution currently is being discussed at one church, requesting arrests of any integrated group even approaching a church which would include, of course, any mixed group driving or walking past.

An Episcopal minister has commented: "Things are so bad that even if I use the word 'integrated' in a non racial sense, as in 'integrated personality,' I can feel a silent tide of resentment rising against me from the congregation."

The police have not hesitated in making arrests, though to date no formal complaints have been signed by any church officials or members of the congregations. On one occasion, at Galloway Methodist Church, a police officer actually invaded a Sunday school room to arrest an integrated group that had been invited inside by church members. The "agitators" were charged with trespassing, although no complaint was signed by any church representative. "The police took it upon themselves to prosecute in behalf of the church," Reverend King explains. "This and other aspects of the police action have raised serious questions about the supposed separation of church and state." Significantly, when the wife of one of the men arrested asked the minister to intervene, he told her: "You know I am helpless. The church is in the hands of the (police) officers."

Within the churches, discussion seems taboo as it is elsewhere in Mississippi. The Sunday after Medgar Evers' murder, John Garner, a Tougaloo faculty member, tried to explain to his Methodist Sunday school class some of the inaccuracies in press reports of the slaying. The next Sunday, the class president announced that in the future "all members of the class are not to say anything that might offend the basic beliefs of anyone else in the class;" in other words, cease all discussion of race relations. More recently, when Galloway's Women's Society of Christian Service voted to withdraw support from its national organization because the parent group had furnished bond money for the demonstrators, Garner's wife spoke against the resolution. Women crowded around her, screaming: "You're a Communist! You're a Communist!" At Capital Street Church, a move is reportedly under way to expel from membership a Millsaps faculty member who has urged moderation of the race issue. And at one church, where the minister resigned in protest against the barring of Negroes, the board of stewards passed a resolution saying it wanted a "minister that will preach what the congregation wants to hear."



The tension in Jackson's churches is obvious and bewildering even to fellow Southerners. As I was checking out of my hotel, I overheard a Baptist from Tennessee telling a friend of his visit to a Jackson church: "I had the feeling that if I said, 'God is love,' people would jump up shrieking that I was dirty integrationist."

High church officials have provided little leadership in the crisis. The Methodist bishop, Marvin Franklin, has flatly told visiting Chicago ministers: "I may go to Hell for it, but I'm not going to take a stand on this issue." Methodist district superintendent J. M. Leggett, on the other hand, has actually assumed a negative role. On one occasion, according to Reverend King, the superintendent refused to serve holy communion to ministers and students who were jailed for trying to attend church, commenting that it would be a "mockery of the sacraments" and that even Christ would refuse to serve "common criminals." (Once when Protestant ministers refused to visit the prisoners, a Jewish rabbi agreed to do so. After a short service, he launched into a droning, religious chant. Amidst his sing song Hebrew sentences, he slipped in English phrases, conveying the day's headlines without attracting the Jailer's attention.) Another time, Reverend Leggett reportedly threatened to have Reverend King committed to the state mental hospital at Whitfield because the Tougaloo chaplain would not "call off his dogs" in the integration movement. (This has raised genuine concern among Reverend King's attorneys. Apparently, under Mississippi law, anyone can sign papers to have another person committed, with the judicial process consisting only of a perfunctory hearing.)

Even the Jackson office of Western Union has entered into the church controversy, at times holding up bond money from other states so that arrested ministers and students would be forced to remain in jail a few hours longer. When I left Mississippi, one idea under discussion by integration leaders was the establishment of an "underground church," in other words the holding of worship services in private living rooms and other secluded spots for Mississippians whose Christian consciences will not permit them to participate in segregated services.

The need of going "underground" is one of many chilling similarities between modern Mississippi and Germany at the time of Nazi ascendancy. Like Germany, Mississippi also suffers the oppression of nonconformity, the omnipotence of the police, the perversion of the courts, the relative unconcern by most of the society about basic freedoms, the unrelenting persecution of a minority group, the harnessing of potentially dynamic social institutions into the service of the state. "There is also," says one newspaper editor, "the Hitler technique of blaming outsiders for all the trouble. And there has been a decided flight of intellectuals from the state, just as there was in Germany." Says Dr. Silver: "Year after year, large numbers of the most ambitious Mississippians, the ablest and the most adaptable to change, have left." In the last year, more than 50 professors have gone from Ole Miss, "many of them literally driven from the state," says Silver, though many would have remained "if there had been any prospect of an atmosphere of freedom or a decent chance to fight for one." Likewise, says Reverend King, "some 60 ministers have fled the Mississippi Conference in the last 5 years, many of them seminary graduates, 'the cream of the crop'." In short, one native Mississippian told me, "This is fast becoming a fascist state imposed on a democratic nation."

Some other Mississippians apparently agree. During the recent election campaign, Walter Smith reports, Republicans led off radio announcements with recordings of Nazi cadence calls, the tromping of marching storm troopers, and shouts of "Seig Heil." followed by a voice asking: "You thought it couldn't happen in Mississippi?"

In such an atmosphere, wrote a Chicago Daily News reporter recently, "you cannot leave Mississippi without the conviction that tragedy waits for the people there." Many Mississippians, probably the vast majority of whites, have not yet grasped that they are in the vortex of a revolution; they somehow cling to the naive belief that the rising tide of black anger is transitory, a puppet protest stirred up by "communists" who will someday withdraw. At best the white community talks in long range terms of the Negro "preparing himself" for integration, of gradually allowing him to take a more prominent role in society "when he is ready for it."

But the Negro, brushing away the cobwebs of a century's waiting, has no further patience with gradualism. One told me: "I don't know how soon things will change, but it won't be years and years. We don't have years and years." In connection with the argument that Negroes are not yet "ready" for equality, Jesse Brown's observation is interesting: "At a movie theater here, even the lowest level of white man in rags, drunk, can go up to the window and get a ticket. But Ralph Bunche or Thurgood Marshall can't. How much more getting ready is it going to take for a Negro Ph.D. or a Negro federal judge to be prepared for equality with the white man in the gutter? Furthermore, what if 10 million Negroes aren't ready but 5 million are? Why should the five be held back to wait for the others?"

Some Mississippians feel the situation is so hopeless that they suggest "someone should put a fence around the state and turn it into an insane asylum." But others, particularly in Jackson, are counting minor breakthroughs: there the public library has been desegregated, transportation terminals no longer can segregate waiting rooms, the airport restaurant will serve Negroes, and some churches from time to time have admitted them. The next breakthrough may come in the downtown stores, which have been under Negro boycott for several months. The "selective buying" is seeking to change policies that are typical of white owned stores throughout Mississippi: maintenance of white and colored restrooms and drinking fountains, refusal to let Negroes try on clothes without buying them, refusal by clerks to use courtesy titles (Mr., Mrs., sir, madam) in addressing Negroes (one Sears clerk was threatened with dismissal because a manager overheard him say, "Thank you, sir," to a Negro who had purchased a necktie,) refusal to use Mr. and Mrs. on bills sent to Negroes, refusal to hire qualified Negroes for any except menial tasks and the practice of waiting on white customers ahead of Negroes. (Strangely enough, an Episcopal bishop once commented that he thought only one demand among all these was "too radical" ever to be accepted by Mississippians: that Negroes be addressed with courtesy titles.)

Some companies have given in to the demands, and others may follow in order to survive. One bakery, for instance, recently reported that it is losing nearly \$1,000 a day because of the boycott, and the city reportedly has had to extend tax credit to some firms.

Ultimately, however, many observers feel the most hope lies in voter registration. "If Negroes had the vote in Mississippi," says Jesse Brown, "we'd be getting from the legislature what we're having to get from the Supreme Court and demonstrations. This is the master key." The temper of the times indicates, however, that before this key opens the door to freedom much violence lies ahead. "It is part of the Mississippi way," says one observer, "to start shooting when you see yourself losing." (Anonymous shootings are facilitated in Mississippi by the facts that almost everyone owns a gun as it is big hunting country and that many automobiles do not, for some mysterious reason, display license plates, a condition which does not seem to trouble the police.) Still, no amount of violence is likely to stop the integrationists; many are fully aware that they may be murdered (as was Medgar Evers when his NAACP group began to register some gains in its fight), and they have come to terms with this. "We believe that ultimately nonviolence can win out," Reverend King explains. "The more of their (the segregationists') violence we can

take onto ourselves, the more we take it out of their systems. Maybe if we're still alive when they're exhausted, we can talk to them in a sensible way." Adds a white student from Georgia (who uses an assumed name at Tougaloo so that her family will not suffer reprisals): "When you start fighting for civil rights, it is almost like a conversion experience. You change your whole sense of values. Jail means nothing to you. You learn to be physically beaten. These things do not matter, because you know the future lies with you."

Nevertheless, the integrationists need help. Many would like to see more intervention by the federal government. "The Justice Department has done more under the Kennedy administration than ever before," says Reverend King. "But still, we can't feel they care as much for us in Mississippi as they would if we were traveling in East Berlin, for instance. If one of us was killed there, the nation would go to the risk of war over it. But if we are killed defending civil rights in Mississippi, the government sends telegrams to our wives."

"It is time the government acted as more than an arbiter. We need protection from the very police."

"The segregationists can kill us off systematically, they can bomb a church like they did in Birmingham, they can do one crime against us every night and go on doing them indefinitely. But unless the Negroes turn out a violent crowd of thousands against the whites and an all out clash looks imminent, the government will do nothing."

(Some observers feel such all out race war may come sooner than expected. Despite the philosophy of nonviolence, they say, every man has his breaking point, and sooner or later, Negroes will have more than they can stand peacefully.)

Illustrative of this was a recent incident in Jackson. A college educated Negro was ordered by a service station operator to stop drinking from a "white" fountain. The Negro refused, and the attendant turned a water hose on him. Then, without warning, the white man dropped the hose and started toward his cash register, where many station attendants keep revolvers. The Negro pulled a gun and shot him dead. "At some point," says one Negro, "it is only human to meet violence with violence." Often when that happens, Mississippi could become the biggest bloodbath the nation has ever known.)

Meanwhile, the integrationists are looking to individuals from out of state for help in applying peaceful pressure such as the Methodist ministers who have been coming weekly from Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland and other cities to demonstrate at Jackson churches. "The pattern cannot be broken, and Mississippi brought back into the mainstream of American life, except by outside pressure," declares Reverend King. "For one thing, continual outside pressure may help the liberal white community revolt. And that would be a big step forward."

Also, it is important that "outsiders" remember that they are intimately affected by what happens in Mississippi. Explains Dr. Stanley Hallett, an executive of the Church Federation of Greater Chicago who led the first delegation of out of state ministers to Jackson: "Through the federal government, we subsidize Mississippi and have a right to know how our money is being spent." (Despite Mississippi's incessant bleating about state's rights, it drew some \$750 million in U.S. government funds in 1961.) "As residents of cities like Chicago, we care for refugees from Mississippi and can expect to continue to do so. Many future citizens of northern cities are being shaped and molded by Mississippi institutions. The failure of Mississippi to provide education, participation in democratic institutions, and training in job skills, plus the formation of fears, hatreds, and prejudices, are a major concern for residents of these cities. And the denial of political opportunities, including the right to vote, means that men who are unrepresentative are in significant positions of power in shaping both domestic and foreign policy which affect all of us."

"Further, there are certain kinds of confrontation of issues which must be raised by "outsiders." No one in the society can raise them and hope to survive, but once the issues are raised in a way that cannot be dodged, the genuine moderate is then given working space that can lead to constructive change.

"Finally, for a Christian, the "outsider" question is utterly irrelevant from the point of view of the meaning of our faith. Our Lord responded to the "outsider" argument with the story of the good Samaritan, and indicated that in the household of faith, all men are "insiders" in a fellowship of concern, service, and suffering."

**TEACHING MATERIAL FOR UNIT VII**

*[Editors' Note: This is a Collection of teaching material suggested in the Lesson Plan of Unit VII, Part 2. Include also the Prospectus for a Freedom Summer and the COFO Flyers in the Supplementary Documents.]*

Campaign Literature on Mrs. Hamer**MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC PARTY**

1017 Lynch Street  
Jackson, Mississippi

I. Basis for the Development of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party and for Challenging the Seating of the Regular Mississippi Democratic Party at the Democratic National Convention.

A. The Mississippi Democratic Party discriminates against Negroes who wish to participate in the party and in state political affairs.

1. The Mississippi Democratic Party has control of the state legislative, executive, and judicial branches in Mississippi. All 49 senators and all but one of the 122 representatives are Democrats. All state executive officials such as governor, secretary of state, attorney general are Democrats.

a. The state legislature has consistently passed laws and set registration standards which exclude Negroes from the registration books.

b. The state executive was elected to office on the basis of a campaign which was largely directed toward keeping Negroes from registering to vote.

c. The state judicial system does not give Negroes judicial relief in voting cases. Only cases carried to the federal courts have resulted in any measure of relief for Negro applicants.

d. County registrars are elected to office. All county registrars are Democrats.

Any registered voter can vote in the Democratic primary and attend Democratic Party precinct conventions. Thus exclusion from the right to vote means exclusion from the Democratic party.

2. The State Democratic Convention is being held in the Jackson Municipal Auditorium and the Heidelberg Hotel. Both of these facilities are segregated.

B. The Mississippi Democratic Party has consistently devoted itself to the perpetuation of segregation, racism, and the oppression of minorities. The party has made it impossible for Negroes of the state or white people who consider all people to be citizens to find it in their interest to participate in the Democratic Party of the state as it is now constituted.

C. Mississippi Citizens who are in sympathy with the goals, platform, and national candidates of the national Democratic party cannot support these goals, platform and candidates by becoming a part of the Mississippi Democratic Party.

1. The Mississippi Democratic Party platform is in direct opposition to that of the national party.

2. The Mississippi Democratic Party has in party literature stated that it is not a part of the national party.

The Mississippi Democratic Party has not supported Democratic presidential candidates in the past and shows indications of refusing to support them this election.

## II. The Development of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.

Because of these concerns and conclusions, the Council of Federated Organizations (a coalition of all the national and local civil rights and citizenship education groups in the state) decided to aid local citizens in setting up a Democratic Party structure to challenge the exiting party and give Negroes an experience in the politics from which they have been excluded. This party will be open to citizens of both races, will encourage political participation on the part of all, and will conform to the platform and support the candidates of the National Democratic Party.

Registrars are being established in every county in the state; registrants will fill out a simplified voting form, the Freedom Registration form, based on the voting application used in several Northern states. No literacy test will be applied to registrants; the only requirement for registration is that the applicant be over 21 and a resident of the state. Over 100,000 people will be registered in this manner. Anyone who is registered is eligible to vote in the Freedom Democratic Party conventions and to take part in party work.

## III. Challenging the seating of Mississippi Delegates to the National Democratic Party Convention

The Freedom Democratic Party has been officially established. At a meeting April 26 in Jackson, approximately 200 delegates elected a Temporary State Executive Committee. The Temporary Executive Committee will be responsible for supervising the calling of meetings throughout the state which will parallel the meetings through which the regular party selects its candidates to the National Convention. These meetings will follow the pattern stipulated in the Election Laws of Mississippi as closely as possible:

This pattern is: precinct meetings, which may be attended by anyone who has been registered on the FDP registration books. (They need not be officially registered voters, since in many counties no Negroes have been allowed to register at all.) The precinct meetings will select delegates to the County Conventions, where delegates will be selected to the State Convention. Prior to the State Convention, these delegates will meet by Congressional District Caucus. At this Caucus about half the delegates from the state to the National Convention will be selected; the State Executive Committee will be selected, the State Executive Committee will be ratified, and the National Committeeman and Committeewoman will be elected.

These delegates will then attend the National Democratic Convention, where they will challenge the credentials of the regular party through the Credentials Committee. In all, 68 delegates will be chosen, the number allotted the regular party. There will be 46 delegates and 22 alternates.

In order to test the regular party, Negroes will also attend the precinct meetings of the regular party throughout the state. The discrimination that is sure to occur, especially in the hard-core areas, will be an additional part of the challenge argument. These precinct meetings will be held June 16.

## MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM DEMOCRATIC PARTY

P.O. Box 1329

Jackson, Mississippi

Telephone: 352-9605 (601)

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE RE: FREEDOM VOTE CAMPAIGN

Candidate Biography:

MRS. FANNIE LOU HAMER

Candidate for U.S. Congress

Second District

In a speech during the spring primary campaign, Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer declared that “politically” our district remains isolated from the mainstream of American life. “The conditions that prevail in Mississippi are horrible. Cotton, our chief product, has become an increasingly less profitable commodity. There is little industry and few towns. The dominant economic system is still sharecropping and we have the lowest family income levels in the nation. And we know we want to change these things.”

Mrs. Hamer is opposing Jamie Whitten, chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture. The district is 59% Negro. In her campaign speeches Mrs. Hamer vows to “undo everything Jamie Whitten has done in Washington.” Whitten several years ago was responsible for the death of a program which would have trained 2400 tractor drivers in the state. 600 of the prospective trainees would have been white. Whitten claimed the program would “upset the local economy.”

On August 31, 1962, Mrs. Hamer filed a voter registration application; the same day she was fired from the job of plantation timekeeper that she had held for eighteen years and was told she must immediately move off the plantation. Ten days later sixteen shots were fired into the home in which she was staying.

Mrs. Hamer has attended the citizenship and leadership courses of both the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating committee (SNCC). While returning from the SCLC workshop in June of 1963, Mrs. Hamer was arrested for “disorderly conduct” and severely beaten while in jail. She has never fully recovered from the effects of this beating. She was arrested for going into the white rest room at the bus station that night.

Mrs. Hamer is 47 years old and lives with her husband and two adopted children in Sunflower County, home of Senator James O. Eastland.

Mississippi Voter Registration Form (Regular)

Reproduced below is a facsimile of the form currently in use for registration: 7/23/64

## SWORN WRITTEN APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION

(by reason of the prospectus of Section 244 of the Constitution of Mississippi and House Bill No. 95, approved March 24, 1955, the applicant is required to fill in this form in his own handwriting in the presence of the registrar and without assistance or suggestion of any other person or memorandum.)

1. Write the date of this application \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is your full name? \_\_\_\_\_
3. State your age and date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_
4. What is your occupation? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Where is your business carried on? \_\_\_\_\_
6. By whom are you employed? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Are you a citizen of the United States and inhabitant of Mississippi? \_\_\_\_\_
8. For how long have you resided in Mississippi? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Where is your place of residence in the District? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Specify the date when such residence began: \_\_\_\_\_
11. State your prior place of residence, if any: \_\_\_\_\_
12. Check which oath you desire to take: (1) General \_\_\_\_\_  
 (2) Minister's \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Minister's Wife \_\_\_\_\_  
 (4) If under 21 years at present, but 21 years by date of general election \_\_\_\_\_
13. If there is more than one person of your same name in the precinct, by what name do you wish to be called \_\_\_\_\_
14. Have you ever been convicted of any of the following bribery, theft, arson, obtaining money or goods under false pretenses, perjury, forgery, embezzlement, or bigamy? \_\_\_\_\_
15. If your answer to Question 14 is "Yes", name the crime or crimes of which you have been convicted, and the date and place of such or convictions: \_\_\_\_\_
16. Are you a minister of the gospel in charge of an organization, church, or the wife of such a minister? \_\_\_\_\_
17. If your answer to Question 16 is "Yes", state the length of your residence in the election district: \_\_\_\_\_
18. Write and copy in the space below: Section \_\_\_\_\_ of the Constitution of Mississippi: (Instruction to Registrar: You will designate the section of the Constitution and point out same to applicant.)
19. Write in the space below a reasonable interpretation (the meaning) of the section of the Constitution of Mississippi which you have just copied:
20. Write in the space below a statement setting forth your understanding of the duties and obligations of citizenship under a constitutional form of government.
21. Sign and attach hereto the oath or affirmation named in Question 12.

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The applicant will sign his name here.



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sworn to and subscribed before me by the within named \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ on this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_ 19 \_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 COUNTY REGISTRAR

Freedom Registration Form

- (1) Write today's date \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) Write your full name \_\_\_\_\_
- (3) How old are you today \_\_\_\_\_
- (4) Are you a United States citizen \_\_\_\_\_
- (5) How long have you lived in Mississippi \_\_\_\_\_
- (6) What county do you live in \_\_\_\_\_
- (7) How long have you lived in that county \_\_\_\_\_
- (8) What is your address now \_\_\_\_\_
- (9) Are you a minister or the wife of a minister \_\_\_\_\_

All of the statements above are true \_\_\_\_\_  
 (signature of applicant)

Do not write below this line

-----  
 State of Mississippi, County of \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sworn to and subscribed before me by the above named \_\_\_\_\_  
 on this, the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 196\_\_.

[See also back of COFO Flyer: Freedom Registration]

SAMPLE SECTIONS OF THE MISSISSIPPI CONSTITUTION

Section 8. All persons, resident in this state, citizens of the United States, are hereby declared citizens of the State of Mississippi.

Sample interpretation: Anybody who lives in Mississippi and is an American citizen is also a citizen of the State of Mississippi.

Section 30. There shall be no imprisonment for debt.

Sample interpretation: A person can not be put in jail just because he owes money.

Now write your own interpretations for the sections given below.

Section 14. No person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property, except by due process of law.

Section 20. No person shall be elected or appointed to office in this state for life or during good behavior, but the term of all offices shall be for some specified period.

Section 21. The privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in the case of rebellion or invasion, the public safety may require it, nor ever without the authority of the Legislature.

Section 22. No person's life or liberty shall be twice placed in jeopardy for the same offense; but there must be an actual acquittal or conviction on the merits to bar another prosecution.

Section 23. The people shall be secure in their persons, houses, and possessions, from unreasonable seizure or search; and no warrant shall be issued without probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, especially designating the place to be searched and the person or thing to be seized.

Section 32. The enumeration of rights in this constitution shall not be construed to deny and impair others retained by, and inherent in, the people.

Section 209. Separate schools shall be maintained for children of the white and colored races.

- <sup>1</sup> Charles Cobb, "Organizing the Freedom Schools," in *Freedom is a Constant Struggle: An Anthology of the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement*, Susan Erenrich, editor and developer, Cultural Center for Social Change, Washington, D.C., 1999, 136.
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid., 110.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid., 136.
- <sup>4</sup> George W. Chilcoat and Jerry A. Ligon, "Theatre as an emancipatory tool: classroom drama in the Mississippi Freedom Schools," in *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, (1998, volume 3, number 5), 518.
- <sup>5</sup> Daniel Perlstein, "Teaching Freedom: SNCC and the Creation of the Mississippi Freedom Schools" in *History of Education Quarterly* 30 (Fall 1990), 310.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid, 312.
- <sup>7</sup> George W. Chilcoat, and Jerry A. Ligon, "'Helping to Make Democracy a Living Reality': The Curriculum Conference of the Mississippi Freedom Schools," in *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision* (XV:1, Fall 1999, 43-68), 58.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid., 59
- <sup>9</sup> Bob Zangrando to Tom Wahman, August 15, 1964. SNCC Papers, Martin Luther King Library and Archives (Sanford NC: Microfilming Corporation of America, 1982; Reel 67, File 337, Page 0640).
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid., 6.
- <sup>11</sup> In this and in many other ways, the Freedom School Curriculum reflected much of the philosophy of John Dewey. Dewey argued that "Organized subject matter . . . does not represent perfection or infallible wisdom; but it is the best at command to further new experiences which may, in some respects at least, surpass the achievements embodied in existing knowledge and works of art. From the standpoint of the educator, in other words, the various studies represent working resources, available capital. Their remoteness from the experience of the young is not, however, seeming; it is real. The subject matter of the learner is not, therefore, it cannot be, identical with the formulated, the crystallized, and systematized subject matter of the adult" (*Democracy and Education*, p. 182, Free Press, 1966, originally published, 1916).
- <sup>12</sup> Staughton Lynd and Harold Bardanelli to Freedom School Teacher, 20 May 1964, SNCC Papers, Martin Luther King Library and Archives (Sanford NC: Microfilming Corporation of America, 1982; Reel 67, File 340, Page 1189).
- <sup>13</sup> George W. Chilcoat and Jerry A. Ligon, "Developing Democratic Citizens: The Mississippi Freedom Schools," in Erenrich, *Constant Struggle*, (edited from "Developing Democratic Citizens: The Mississippi Freedom Schools as a Model for Social Studies Instruction" in *Theory and Research in Social Education*, Spring, 1994, 128-175), 113.
- <sup>14</sup> Howard Zinn, "Freedom Schools," in *The Zinn Reader*, Seven Stories Press, New York, 531.
- <sup>15</sup> Kirsty Powell, *A Report, Mainly on Ruleville Freedom School, Summer Project, 1964*, SNCC, The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee Papers, 1959-1972 (Sanford, NC: Microfilming Corporation of America, 1982) Reel 68, File 367, Page 0582.
- <sup>16</sup> Robert Weisbrodt, *Freedom Bound*, New York, Penguin Books, 1991, 111-112.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid., 111.
- <sup>18</sup> Staughton Lynd, "Freedom Summer," in *Living Inside Our Hope: A Steadfast Radical's Thoughts on Rebuilding the Movement*, ILR Press, Ithaca, New York, 1997, 33.
- <sup>19</sup> Len Holt, *The Summer that Didn't End: The Story of the Mississippi Civil Rights Project of 1964*, Da Capo Press, New York, 1992, 107.
- <sup>20</sup> John Dewey, in *Democracy and Education* argues that thinking requires that we have an aim in view, that we learn about current and past facts for the purposes of creating ideas that we test in action. "The opposite to thoughtful action are routine and capricious behavior . . . . The latter makes the momentary act a measure of value, and ignores the connections of our personal action with the energies of the environment. It says, virtually, 'things are to be just as I happen to like them and this instant,' as routine says in effect, 'let things continue just as I have found them in the past.' Both refuse to acknowledge responsibility for future consequences which flow from present action. Reflection is the acceptance of such responsibility" (Free Press, New York, 1966, 146).
- <sup>21</sup> Zinn, *Reader*, 534
- <sup>22</sup> From the Introduction to the Citizenship Curriculum

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- <sup>23</sup> *Profiles of Typical Freedom Schools*, COFO memo, Jackson office (nd), SNCC, The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee Papers, 1959-1972 (Sanford, NC: Microfilming Corporation of America, 1982) Reel 68, File 364, Page 0552.
- <sup>24</sup> Staughton Lynd, *Freedomways*, Second Quarter, 1965, 304.
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 304.
- <sup>26</sup> George W. Chilcoat and Jerry A. Ligon, "Developing Democratic Citizens: The Mississippi Freedom Schools as a Model for Social Studies Instruction," in *Theory and Research in Social Education* (XXII:2, Spring 1994), 147.
- <sup>27</sup> Len Holt, *Summer*, 108.
- <sup>28</sup> Zinn, *Reader*, 537.
- <sup>29</sup> Zinn, *Reader*, 537.
- <sup>30</sup> Chilcoat and Ligon, *Constant Struggle*, 122.
- <sup>31</sup> Chilcoat and Ligon, *Constant Struggle*, 122.
- <sup>32</sup> Chilcoat and Ligon, *Constant Struggle*, 124.
- <sup>33</sup> Zinn, *Reader*, 536.
- <sup>34</sup> Chilcoat and Ligon, *Constant Struggle*, 120.
- <sup>35</sup> Herbert Aptheker, *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States*. Vol. 7, New York, Citadel Press, 1993, 282.
- <sup>36</sup> Holt, *Summer*, 110.
- <sup>37</sup> Holt, *Summer*, 109.
- <sup>38</sup> Cobb, *Constant Struggle*, 137.
- <sup>39</sup> Chilcoat and Ligon, *Constant Struggle*, 110.
- <sup>40</sup> Zinn, *Reader*, 539.